

VU Research Portal

review van: Administrative courts in Indonesia: a socio-legal study [Review of: A. Bedner (2001) Administrative courts in Indonesia: a socio-legal study]

Colombijn, F.

published in

Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde
2003

document version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in VU Research Portal](#)

citation for published version (APA)

Colombijn, F. (2003). review van: Administrative courts in Indonesia: a socio-legal study [Review of: A. Bedner (2001) Administrative courts in Indonesia: a socio-legal study]. *Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde*, 159(4), 621-623.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal ?

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

E-mail address:

vuresearchportal.ub@vu.nl



Book Reviews

- Monika Arnez, Keith Foulcher, Clearing a space; Postcolonial readings of modern Indonesian literature. Leiden: KITIV Press, 2002, 381 pp. [Verhandelingen 202.], Tony Day (eds)
- R.H. Barnes, Thomas Reuter, The house of our ancestors; Precedence and dualism in highland Balinese society. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002, viii + 359 pp. [Verhandelingen 198.]
- Freek Colombijn, Adriaan Bedner, Administrative courts in Indonesia; A socio-legal study. The Hague: Kluwer law international, 2001, xiv + 300 pp. [The London-Leiden series on law, administration and development 6.]
- Manuelle Franck, Peter J.M. Nas, The Indonesian town revisited. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian studies, 2002, vi + 428 pp. [Southeast Asian dynamics.]
- Hans Hägerdal, Ernst van Veen, Decay or defeat? An inquiry into the Portuguese decline in Asia 1580-1645. Leiden: Research school of Asian, African and Amerindian studies, 2000, iv + 306 pp. [Studies on overseas history, 1.]
- Rens Heringa, Genevieve Duggan, Ikats of Savu; Women weaving history in eastern Indonesia. Bangkok: White Lotus, 2001, xiii + 151 pp. [Studies in the material culture of Southeast Asia 1.]
- August den Hollander, Kees Groeneboer, Een vorst onder de taalgeleerden; Herman Nuebronner van der Tuuk; Afgevaardigde voor Indië van het Nederlandsch Bijbelgenootschap 1847-1873; Een bronnenpublicatie. Leiden: KITIV Uitgeverij, 2002, 965 pp.
- Edwin Jurriëns, William Atkins, The politics of Southeast Asia's new media. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002, xii + 235 pp.
- Victor T. King, Poline Bala, Changing border and identities in the Kelabit highlands; Anthropological reflections on growing up in a Kelabit village near an international frontier. Kota Samarahan, Sarawak: Unit Penerbitan Universiti Malayasia Sarawak, Institute of East Asian studies, 2002, xiv + 142 pp. [Dayak studies contemporary society series 1.]
- Han Knapen, Bernard Sellato, Innermost Borneo; Studies in Dayak cultures. Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2002, 221 pp.
- Michael Laffan, Rudolf Mrázek, Engineers of happy land; Technology and nationalism in a colony. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002, xvii + 311 pp. [Princeton studies in culture/power/history 15.]
- Johan Meuleman, Michael Francis Laffan, Islamic nationhood and colonial Indonesia; The umma below the winds. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, xvi + 294 pp. [SOAS/RoutledgeCurzon studies on the Middle East 1.]
- Rudolf Mrázek, Heidi Dahles, Tourism, heritage and national culture in Java; Dilemmas of a local community. Leiden: International Institute for Asian studies/Curzon, 2001, xvii + 257 pp.
- Anke Niehof, Kathleen M. Adams, Home and hegemony; Domestic service and identity politics

in South and Southeast Asia. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000, 307 pp., Sara Dickey (eds)

-Robert van Niel, H.W. van den Doel, Afscheid van Indië; De val van het Nederlandse imperium in Azië. Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2001, 475 pp.

-Anton Ploeg, Bruce M. Knauft, Exchanging the past; A rainforest world of before and after. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002, x + 303 pp.

-Harry A. Poeze, Nicolaas George Bernhard Gouka, De petitie-Soetardjo; Een Hollandse misser in Indië? (1936-1938). Amsterdam: Rozenberg, 303 pp.

-Harry A. Poeze, Jaap Harskamp (compiler), The Indonesian question; The Dutch/Western response to the struggle for independence in Indonesia 1945-1950; an annotated catalogue of primary materials held in the British Library. London; The British Library, 2001, xx + 210 pp.

-Elisabeth Schröder-Butterfill, Jan Breman, Good times and bad times in rural Java; Case study of socio-economic dynamics in two villages towards the end of the twentieth century. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002, xii + 330 pp. [Verhandelingen 195.], Gunawan Wiradi (eds)

-Mariëtte van Selm, L.P. van Putten, Ambitie en onvermogen; Gouverneurs-generaal van Nederlands-Indië 1610-1796. Rotterdam: ILCO-productions, 2002, 192 pp.

-Heather Sutherland, William Cummings, Making blood white; Historical transformations in early modern Makassar. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002, xiii + 257 pp.

-Gerard Termorshuizen, Olf Praamstra, Een feministe in de tropen; De Indische jaren van Mina Kruseman. Leiden: KITIV Uitgeverij, 2003, 111 p. [Boekerij Oost en West'.]

-Jaap Timmer, Dirk A.M. Smidt, Kamoro art; Tradition and innovation in a New Guinea culture; With an essay on Kamoro life and ritual by Jan Pouwer. Amsterdam: KIT Publishers/Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, 2003, 157 pp.

-Sikko Visscher, Amy L. Freedman, Political participation and ethnic minorities; Chinese overseas in Malaysia, Indonesia and the United States. London: Routledge, 2000, xvi + 231 pp.

-Reed L. Wadley, Mary Somers Heidhues, Golddiggers, farmers, and traders in the Chinese districts' of West Kalimantan, Indonesia. Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia program, Cornell University, 2003, 309 pp.

-Edwin Wieringa, Jan Parmentier, Peper, Plancius en porselein; De reis van het schip Swarte Leeuw naar Atjeh en Bantam, 1601-1603. Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2003, 237 pp. [Werken van de Linschoten-Vereeniging 101.], Karel Davids, John Everaert (eds)

-Edwin Wieringa, Leonard Blussé, Kennis en Compagnie; De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie en de moderne wetenschap. Amsterdam: Balans, 2002, 191 pp., Ilonka Ooms (eds)

-Edwin Wieringa, Femme S. Gaastra, De geschiedenis van de VOC. Zutphen; Walburg Pers, 2002, 192 pp.

In: Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde 159 (2003), no: 4, Leiden, 618-675

Book reviews

Keith Foulcher and Tony Day, *Clearing a space; Postcolonial readings of modern Indonesian literature*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002, 381 pp. [Verhandelingen 202.] ISBN 90.6718.189.7. Price: EUR 30 (paperback).

MONIKA ARNEZ

This collection of essays, the outcome of a workshop that was held at the University of Sidney in May 1998, is actually the first attempt to analyse modern Indonesian literature in the light of postcolonial theory and literary criticism. The fictional texts treated in this collection cover the period from the 1920s to the 1990s. In the introduction of the anthology Tony Day and Keith Foulcher define the terms postcolonialism and postcoloniality as follows: "Postcolonialism" [...] is the term for a critical approach to understanding the ongoing effects of colonialism in texts, while "postcoloniality" is the word that points to the nature and ramifications of those effects'. (p. 3). Against this background the main goal of the book is to show, from various perspectives, what position identity and language occupy in postcolonial theory with regard to Indonesia. When addressing the problem of identity, the authors of this anthology often draw on the term 'hybridity'. They examine how different cultural forms over time tend to produce new cultures and identities with their own histories and special characteristics. A significant topic in this context is the question of how people who lived during the Dutch colonial period defined their own identity against the backdrop of Dutch colonial 'superiority'. For instance, Paul Tickell shows using the example of the novel *Matahariah*, which Marco Kartodikromo published in 1918 and 1919, that Dutch views about race were not necessarily shared by the local people. His focus on the main character, a white woman who feels attracted to Asian culture and turns against colonialism, enables him to demonstrate that race does not always determine identity. Keith Foulcher analyses which role mimicry plays in the novel *Sitti Noerbaja*, written by Marah Roesli in 1922. Following Bhaba's statement that those people imitating colonial power were 'almost the same but not quite', he tries to characterize Marah Roesli's point of view with regard to mimicry. He stresses that local people did not just copy Dutch customs, but that they often had a sense of *bangsa*, an identity of their own, although they had no name for it. Thus, the

novel's heroes did not hesitate to face the unknown, although they imagined a future based on colonial ideas of individual freedom and responsibility.

With regard to language, most authors start out from the hypothesis that Melayu/Indonesian was a lingua franca serving as a means of communication across national borders. However, as Henk Maier and Will Derks claim, this language was nevertheless controlled and manipulated both during the Dutch colonial era and after independence. The Dutch supported the version of high Malay from Riau, and since independence Jakarta influenced the language by promoting a modern, national language, as Derks highlights in this volume. Goenawan Mohamad classifies the Indonesian language differently by revealing, using Asrul Sani's essays as examples, that Indonesian does not have a 'home'; that is, it can be regarded as a language without any clear sense of cultural authority. In Henk Maier's opinion the language used in fictional postcolonial texts is marked by 'stammer and stutter', by a wish on the part of the authors to give expression to their spontaneous, sometimes controversial feelings and ideas. He shows on the basis of works by Pramoedya Ananta Toer, such as *Tjerita dari Blora* (1952), that the loose, unconnected words the author uses often do not convey any meaning, but invite the reader to make sense of them. He wants Malay authors to see to it that the postcolonial voice of anxiety, fragment and freedom takes a more prominent part than 'the voice of truth, order and repression' (p. 82). A refreshingly critical article about postcolonial studies in the context of Indonesian literature comes from Will Derks, who claims that Indonesia's literature from the period since independence occupies a unique position which a postcolonial template cannot be made to fit. A decisive aspect in this context is the ambivalent language policy of the Dutch colonial government. The Dutch language was only selectively spread among the local population, and the use of Malay was reinforced. Since Indonesia is the only ex-colony where the colonial rulers did not try to impose their own language, Malay became the official language in independent Indonesia. Derks illustrates that as one result of this development, orally transmittable forms of fiction like poems and short stories became more important in Indonesian literature than Western-style novels.

Clearing a space can be recommended to specialists in Indonesian literature, and indeed to all those with an interest in postcolonial literature, on which subject it offers a fresh perspective and some innovative attention to aspects that scholars have hitherto tended to ignore.

Thomas Reuter, *The house of our ancestors; Precedence and dualism in highland Balinese society*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002, viii + 359 pp. [Verhandelingen 198.] ISBN 90.6718.185.4. Price: EUR 40 (paperback).

R.H. BARNES

Bali is best known to the outside world as the home of a Hindu minority in a Muslim nation, whose scenic rice fields, elaborate ritual and prolific art, theater and music have made it an attraction to tourists. The former kingdoms of the south are most visited and have had the greatest impact on general imagination. Another category of Balinese, those deemed to be most original, are the Bali Aga, whose villages are generally, but not always, located in the mountainous interior. This work is the most extensive account of the Bali Aga to date. It is structured by a detailed comparison of two such villages, but the comparison is pushed farther than that on many themes. The author has mustered information from as many as 50 Bali Aga villages in all. As a consequence, this excellent monograph very considerably extends our knowledge of the extensive variety of social forms to be found on Bali.

In addition to the internal comparison, the author wishes to situate the Bali Aga within studies of Austronesian societies in general. For his purposes he draws on James Fox's notion of precedence, as opposed to Louis Dumont's formulations on Indian caste hierarchy, Claude Lévi-Strauss's category of 'house societies', and the literature on dualism. In passing he makes cogent, but not polemical, criticisms of the analytic notions of Pierre Bourdieu and Lévi-Strauss. In particular he holds that Bourdieu's depiction of 'practical mastery' is exaggerated and that Bourdieu's notion of 'concealment' is not characteristic of Bali Aga, whose models of communal life contain a fundamental sense of ambiguity and openness. In this way they depart from a pattern of denial Bourdieu would expect. Reuter sees rather more value in Lévi-Strauss's notion of house societies than I do. Nevertheless he comments that there are a number of dimensions on which Bali Aga society does not correspond to Lévi-Strauss's model and reviews some of the criticism to which it has been subjected. Reuter denies the applicability of Dumont's ideas of hierarchy and favours instead Fox's conception of precedence.

The main body of the book begins with a look at regional domains, moves on to quite detailed accounts of the villages of Sukuwana and Batukaang, before considering variation in the distribution of resources. The second section takes up ancestral groups of origin, their temples and their rituals, as well as the structure and social significance of the house, marriage and kinship. The ancestral groups are patri-focal, but membership may be acquired by other means than patrilineal descent. Links through women receive

almost as much local attention.

The whole of the discussion is carried out in enormous detail and with almost relentless analysis. Fortunately, the presentation is, with few exceptions, remarkably clear and unambiguous. One ambiguity though has to do with what Reuter means by 'classical kinship theory'. I have been unable to make up my mind whether he intends this as intellectual shorthand or whether it is a polemical fabrication. The maps, figures and tables are all helpful. The book is lavishly illustrated with 32 colour plates. However, a book containing as much Balinese vocabulary as this one does desperately need a glossary or at least an indication of first mention in the index. In general the index itself is hopelessly inadequate. Otherwise, Reuter has provided us with an outstanding treatment of a very interesting group of people with considerable significance for scholars working in other parts of Southeast Asia or with speakers of Austronesian languages elsewhere.

Adriaan Bedner, *Administrative courts in Indonesia; A socio-legal study*. The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2001, xiv + 300 pp. [The London-Leiden Series on Law, Administration and Development 6.] ISBN 90.4111.633.8. Price: EUR 150 (hardback).

FREEK COLOMBIJN

Administrative courts became operational in Indonesia in 1991, in the midst of the abortive Indonesian *glasnost*. Many Indonesians hoped that the administrative courts would provide individual citizens with more effective protection against the authoritarian New Order state. At the level of the society at large, it was hoped that the courts would help establish the rule of law. Among the best-known cases brought before administrative courts are: Walhi and others versus the President (1994), Gunawan Mohamad (editor of *Tempo*) versus the Minister of Information (1994), and Arief Budiman versus the Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana (1995). In this book, Adriaan Bedner aims to give 'a comprehensive analysis of the origins, jurisdiction and performance of the administrative courts, from both a legal and a social scientific standpoint' (p. 2). In so far as a study can ever be comprehensive, Bedner has succeeded with flying colours.

Bedner begins his study with a chapter on the history leading up to the promulgation of the Law on Administrative Courts in 1986. In the next two chapters, the author describes the basic concepts underlying the law and the court procedure, making use of the law's Elucidation, Supreme Court circular letters, and judgements and comments by jurists. Bedner points out flaws in

the law. For example, the time limit for the preparatory investigation is set at thirty days, 'but', Bedner remarks, 'the Elucidation adds that the judge must not too strictly apply this term (!)' (p. 109). Readers who are not jurists would have appreciated an explanation of legal terms (for example: *détournement de pouvoir*, standing to sue). They would also have been helped by the equivalent Indonesian terms, with which many of them may be more familiar than with English legal terminology, and which are sadly lacking in this book.

In the next three chapters Adriaan Bedner presents a number of cases. Few cases have been described in legal journals, and the core of the legal analysis is based on newspaper articles and on 155 cases, which the author examined in three administrative court archives. These chapters focus respectively on civil service disputes, conflicts over land, and cases with constitutional law implications. The problems of the civil servants seem rather trivial, but the land disputes are among the key issues in contemporary Indonesia. Some cases with constitutional law implications have drawn wide popular attention and sparked discussions on the rule of law. Some courageous judgements, defying the executive power, are counterbalanced by 'at least one judicial disaster, being the Supreme Court judgement in the *Tempo* case' (p. 171).

In the last two chapters, Bedner has studied non-legal aspects that influence the administrative courts' performance. These chapters are to a considerable extent based on interviews with judges. There are many negative factors. The corps of judges consists partly of careerists, who switched to administrative courts because they could not progress through the ranks of the general courts. Idealistic and independent judges were transferred to outposts where they are less of a nuisance to administrators. The Supreme Court lacks the authority to homogenize lower court decisions, because it is widely assumed to be corrupt, has less expertise than the administrative judges at the lower courts, and undermines its own decisions by so-called holy letters (*surat sakti*) informing a lower court chairman that he must not take further action to execute a certain judgement. Judges are underpaid, and are therefore forced to accept bribes in order to achieve the kind of lifestyle that is expected of them; non-corrupt judges find that their lack of income undercuts their social standing.

Adriaan Bedner concludes that the administrative courts have failed to provide judgements that protect citizens against arbitrary rule and that are supported by consistent legal reasoning. On the positive side, the courts have stimulated debate on the rule of law and thus indirectly contributed to the erosion of the legitimacy of the New Order state.

Administrative courts in Indonesia deals with an important judicial theme which has social and political ramifications. The book has a clear structure and is based on a varied research methodology. Bedner provides a number of recommendations on how to correct flaws in the law and strengthen the posi-

tion of the courts in society and *vis-à-vis* the executive. It remains to be seen whether the Reformasi has created conditions conducive to well-functioning administrative courts.

Peter J.M. Nas (ed.), *The Indonesian town revisited*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2002, vi + 428 pp. [South-east Asian Dynamics.] ISBN 981.230184.4. Price: SGD 79.90 (paperback).

MANUELLE FRANCK

More than 15 years after his first anthology on Indonesian cities, Peter Nas now offers the scholarly community a new focus on urban research in Indonesia, with a book bringing together interdisciplinary contributions written by Indonesian and international researchers. This book highlights vivid research on Indonesian towns, addressing a wide range of subjects. Some of these are rather new: the impact of globalization on the formation and transformation of mega-urban areas, for example, and the important theme of urban anthropology from the point of view of urban symbolism. Some of the contributions have a wide scope – for example, the article by Tommy Firman which gives a general background on the pace and structure of urbanization in the late twentieth century. Most contributions provide rich case studies, useful for the scholarly community. Peter Nas has put them together to make three sections. This tripartite structure is somewhat unsatisfactory in that the book has a common object, the Indonesian town, but no common problematic. Moreover, the introduction puts the contributions in the context of theories in urban anthropology, a field which, as the authors acknowledge, is narrow in scope when compared to the richness of the questions the authors tackle.

The first part of the book deals with the period of rapid urban growth in the 1980s and 90s, and with the emerging mega-urban regions in the era of globalization. The articles focus on the pattern of urban growth, especially the urban sprawl in the periphery of urban cores, as related to investments in new towns and industrial and residential estates. This fits in, interestingly, with key issues in recent urban studies, as most authors have tended to examine the development of metropolitan areas from their periphery/outskirts. Following work by Saskia Sassen, and for Asia Terry McGee, urban studies in the 1990s have in fact mostly focused on the metropolization process and the functional, socio-economic and morphological evolution of large metropolitan areas, within the context of globalization. Most contributions to

this chapter examine the evolution of Jakarta in the late New Order period, a time when the national drive for development has been diverted to profit an elite closely linked to political power. As Cowherd explains, nevertheless, at the same time Indonesia had the tools and expertise to manage rapid urban growth around Jakarta through planning regulations and housing and transportation schemes.

In contrast to the first section, most contributions in the second and third sections focus on the inner cities but present a more heterogeneous stock of subjects. Two other important tendencies in urban studies are reflected in these chapters: the focus on urban symbolism through the study of symbolism in architecture, internal spatial structures, and the perception of the city; and secondly, a tendency to focus on smaller cities.

Through the cosmological interpretation of the internal spatial patterns of Lasem and Cakranegara (the latter being designed according to the ideals of Hindu city planning), Pratiwo and Shuji Funo highlight the organizational principles and symbolism of many other Indonesian cities. Besides spatial organization and architecture, the cultural spectacles which take place in various parts of the cities are meant, as shown in the contribution by Cohen, to build, express, strengthen, or impoverish ethnic or regional identities and cultures. The question of identity-building, whether approached from ethnic, regional, or global/modern points of view, is among the most important issues in modern Indonesia. The articles by Nas and Sluis, Taal, Antweiller, Cohen and Titien Saraswati deal in interesting ways with some aspects of the identity question in urban contexts, often with particular attention to conflicts between local and global identities.

Smaller cities are beginning to catch the attention of urban researchers, and this can be seen in most of the contributions in the second and third sections which deal with cities other than Jakarta. Only two contributions (both of them fascinating), by Colombijn and by Persoon and Cleuren, reflect a (partly) functional approach, considering cities as territorial nodes structuring the economic flows which in turn structure the development of the towns. These studies are at the crossroads of urban and regional studies today. As a geographer (although many historians might agree), I regret that so few contributions focus on the evolution of the functions and the locations of the cities, and on their changing roles in shaping networks and territories at various geographical and chronological scales. However, this book already provides a wide variety of subjects and disciplines and is a very important contribution to urban studies in Indonesia.

Ernst van Veen, *Decay or defeat? An inquiry into the Portuguese decline in Asia 1580-1645*. Leiden: Research School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies, 2000, iv + 306 pp. [Studies in Overseas History, 1.] ISBN 90.5789.051.8. Price: EUR 27.23 (paperback).

HANS HÄGERDAL

In 1580 the aged Dom Henrique, the *rei inquisitador*, passed away, ending two supposedly glorious centuries of Avis rule in Portugal. With the extinction of the old line Philip II of Spain grabbed the opportunity to invade Portugal and proclaim himself ruler, meeting very little resistance in the process. For the next sixty years Spain and Portugal were thus united under one Iberian Crown. This political arrangement had global repercussions since the two kingdoms had established possessions and strongholds in America, Africa and Asia over the past century. It is generally agreed that these sixty years saw a decline of the Portuguese position in Asia. But what was the nature of this weakening of Lusitanian power? What were the factors behind the decline? Was it a matter of social-economic decay, or was it due to political-military defeat?

A substantial amount of scholarly interest has been accorded these complicated questions in recent decades, and in the present thesis Ernst van Veen takes on the challenge of the task anew. Unilinear explanations of history, as he remarks, might be handy, but they are also misleading. In fact the causes of the Portuguese decline in Asia cannot be other than complex. There was a decline, to be sure, but the decline proceeded on different levels which involved the social and financial fundaments of the overseas Portuguese realm, the actions and policies taken by its Dutch rivals, and concurrent developments in Asian kingdoms. These various levels or themes are analyzed in the nine main chapters of the book. The analysis is built on some 240 second-hand works, with use also being made of published Dutch and Portuguese source materials and a number of original VOC sources from Dutch archives.

To begin with, any idea that Spanish (Castilian) rule in Portugal was disastrous in itself can safely be discarded according to Van Veen. Philip II vowed to respect the laws and customs of the country, and unification made little difference in the way it was administrated. For the economically important New Christian merchants (converts from Judaism), the unification was beneficial. Spanish forces were also essential for fighting the Dutch in Brazil, for the sake of Portugal. Furthermore, the effects of hostile Dutch naval action must not be overemphasized. The *Carreira da Índia* (the shipping route between Lisbon and India) certainly collapsed dramatically in the

1630s, but this happened before the Dutch began to blockade the Portuguese stronghold in Goa. Rather, the sudden decline of the Carreira had to do with the exodus of New Christians from Portugal to other Habsburg areas after 1629 – in other words, it was an endogenous development. There is no denying that the position of Portuguese settlements in Asia was fragile, but this is also a demographic issue: the slighter chances of survival understandably made sea travel to the East less popular than migration to Brazil. The almost medieval organisation of the Estado da Índia (the Portuguese administration in Asia) did not exactly improve things either.

Van Veen devotes considerable space to the rise of Dutch power in Asia. He observes that trade between the United Provinces and Portugal was carried on in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in spite of the various embargoes and prohibitions. The famous first voyage to the Indies in 1595-1597 was undertaken for defensive reasons rather than out of economic pressure – had the Dutch not established themselves in the Indies, the English might have preceded them. A clear strategy on the part of the VOC during its first decades of existence, up to the mid-1630s, is hard to discern. 'If the VOC had any strategy during this period, it was that of trial and error' (p. 205). Dutch actions were not co-ordinated well enough to have a real impact on the Portuguese establishment until the last years of Habsburg rule, and in particular the few decades after 1640. An essential, but according to Van Veen often overlooked factor concerns the role of indigenous Asian rulers, the *réis vizinhos*. The first decades of the seventeenth century saw several expansive regimes in West, South, Southeast and East Asia which for various reasons actively undermined the position of the Portuguese.

To sum up, Van Veen identifies a number of institutions and interest groups associated with what the literature terms the Portuguese 'empire'. All these components went into decline in the period under scrutiny, but they did so for various reasons. The real difficulties with the Dutch started with the strategic warfare waged by the VOC Governor General Van Diemen. From 1636 to 1663, the Portuguese lost a number of essential Asian strongholds to the Hollanders as the latter belatedly worked out a winning strategy.

While *Decay or defeat?* is useful in many ways, and several of its conclusions appear judicious, its style is hardly lucid. The bulk of the text is written in a dense way that makes few concessions to the non-specialized reader (although the book does include several well-chosen illustrations). I would have wished in particular for a more forcefully argued conclusion, since the present text ends somewhat abruptly, without making sufficient attempt to tie the many loose ends together. The author seems to have mastered the materials relating to the European factor in Asia very well, although it is hard to see how he could leave such an obvious name as Wallerstein out of the discussion. On the other side, there are a few minor errors in his treat-

ment of data regarding indigenous states. For example, the Bahmani kingdom split up long before 1538 (the last nominal sultan was deposed in 1527) and Vijayanagar was not destroyed but seriously weakened in 1565. From the references it does not seem that Van Veen has gone very deeply – despite his declared intention to do so (p. 210) – into the internal history of the Asian kingdoms which had intercourse with the Portuguese. With these reservations, the author has in my mind produced an often thought-provoking reinterpretation of an exciting period in the history of European expansion.

Genevieve Duggan, *Ikats of Savu; Women weaving history in eastern Indonesia*. Bangkok: White Lotus, 2001, xiii + 151 pp. [Studies in the Material Culture of Southeast Asia 1.] ISBN 974.7534.67.3. Price: USD 30 (paperback).

RENS HERINGA

This book, a revised and extended version of the author's unpublished MA thesis *Ikats weaving and the social organisation on the island of Savu, eastern Indonesia* (Institut für Ethnologie, Heidelberg University, 1998), is the first in a new series of studies in the material culture of Southeast Asia published by the White Lotus Press. The analysis focuses on the ikat textiles of the small island of Savu near Timor, and attempts to define the links between mythology and weaving in order to demonstrate how the textiles have 'formed the fabric of Savunese society throughout time' (p. 6). Access to the genealogies contained in the *silsilah mantra*, a hitherto largely unexplored oral source, for the first time opened the possibility of relating the textiles to the double network of gendered origin groups that forms the foundation of Savunese social organization. The considerable depth of the genealogies made it possible to reconstruct developments over time, while links were also established with known historical events. Throughout the text references to comparable social systems and textiles from other regions in Indonesia add to the scope of the analysis.

As scholars such as Detaq, Fox and Kana have shown, the names and deeds of the male ancestors of the localized patrifocal origin groups have long been common knowledge within and also outside the community. However, the names of the early female ancestors related to the origins of weaving, and those of the two non-localized matrifocal origin groups, have remained hidden within the progenitrix groups. A series of diagrams makes it clear that this secret section of the genealogies precedes the progenitor lines by many generations. In analogy to developments recognized elsewhere in Indonesia, an evolution from a matrifocal into a bilineal system is

hypothesized as the start to a gradual reallocation of tasks between patrifocal newcomers and matrifocal autochthonous people (Chapter 3). Localized patrifocal groups (*udu*, clusters) came to regulate land ownership and religious and political affairs, while the two matrifocal groups (*hubi ae* and *hubi iki*, 'greater blossom' and 'lesser blossom') play a predominant role during life-cycle rituals, most importantly weddings and funerals. This is the logical outcome of a continued preference for marriage within one's matrifocal branch group and of the belief that women and also men reunite with the ancestors of their progenitrix line after death (Chapter 2, pp. 9-12).

Through their weaving skills, the women also give expression to the relationships among the living and the ancestors. A detailed description of the rituals related to dyeing and weaving (Chapter 7), and analyses of the technical, iconographical, and metaphorical features of male and female dress (Chapters 4, 5, 6), demonstrate the close way in which the textiles are interwoven with the two moieties of the matrifocal system. Only a few of the most salient examples can be mentioned here. All weavers establish a continuous link with their ancestors by starting and finishing each weaving season with the particular motif of their descent group. This motif is also prescribed to be worn at their own wedding and funeral, the beginning and the end of their mature lives. The formats and the motifs of the weavings are gender-specific. Particular patterns for women indicate their matrifocal group or branch (*wini*, seed) affiliation. A distinction in format and colour marks a woman's specific *hubi*, while additional stripes in floating warp imply that her husband belongs to a ranked group. Male patterns, by contrast, tend to refer to male activities, or to individual qualities of the wearer such as wealth, rank, or residence. The terminology used for the sections of women's skirt cloths, and to a lesser extent also men's blankets, reveals that each textile is considered a seeing, breathing body. Some ritual cloths for men consist of two unequal halves representing the elder and the younger female moiety, or alternatively the elder and the younger brother. Tiny colored stripes in some of the male cloths denote the wearer's relation to a specific place of residence – be it a village or one of the four ceremonial domains (p. 56). This, incidentally, seems at variance with the statement that the male loin or shoulder cloths do not incorporate any features representing the patrifocal origin groups (p. 55).

All of these examples are valid only for the types of cloth used by that diminishing segment of the population that still adheres to the traditional religion *Jingi tiu*. Several centuries of conversion to Protestantism and colonial influence have given rise to a large body of 'neutral' designs that combine elements of both female origin groups, and feature an additional, technically more advanced ikat method. Textiles of this type have long been preferred for secular or Christian festivities. More recent changes have occasioned the adoption of Javanized and Westernized dress elements that reflect modern

Indonesian lifestyles (Chapter 8). Textiles are thereby shown to function equally as visual reminders of the past (p. 77) and of the present. The generous number of excellent illustrations in colour and in black and white enables the reader to visualize the subject matter of the book clearly. On a final critical note, it may be suggested that closer editing of the text and a more consistent system of numbering the illustrations will add to the quality of future volumes in the series.

Kees Groeneboer, *Een vorst onder de taalgeleerden; Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk; Afgevaardigde voor Indië van het Nederlandsch Bijbelgenootschap 1847-1873; Een bronnenpublicatie*. Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 2002, 965 pp. ISBN 90.6718.156.0. Prijs: EUR 70 (gebonden).

AUGUST DEN HOLLANDER

Deze bronnenuitgave door Kees Groeneboer biedt de complete briefwisseling van de bekende taalkundige Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk met het Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap (NBG) uit de periode 1847-1873, alsmede alle andere uit die periode bekende correspondentie van hem, aangevuld met ander door Van der Tuuk gepubliceerd werk. In die jaren was Van der Tuuk door het NBG naar Indië uitgezonden als taalafgevaardigde voor het Batak en het Balinees.

Het boek van Groeneboer geeft naast een inleiding (pp. 1-31) en een verantwoording (pp. 33-8) in totaal 264 documenten (pp. 41-832) en 10 bijlagen (pp. 833-89). Verder is een lijst met afkortingen gegeven (p. 39), een lijst van publicaties van Van der Tuuk (pp. 891-7), een uitvoerige bibliografie (pp. 899-949) en een uitgebreid register (pp. 951-65). Het boek is door de KITLV Uitgeverij te Leiden bijzonder fraai uitgegeven en overvloedig geïllustreerd met foto's, tekeningen en kaarten.

In de inleiding geeft Groeneboer een schets van het leven en werk van Van der Tuuk, toegespitst op de periode waarover het boek handelt. Deze inleiding voorziet de lezer kort en bondig van de noodzakelijke kennis voor het bestuderen van de bronnen. Een (klein) punt van kritiek betreft de (overgenomen?) toelichting bij de afbeelding van het familiewapen van Van der Tuuk (p. 3), die nog enige redactie had verdiend (normaliseren spelling; 'zeventiendede').

Wat het boek precies biedt, krijgt de lezer echter pas te horen aan het begin van de verantwoording (p. 33). Hier geeft de auteur allereerst de afbakening van zijn onderwerp, zowel inhoudelijk als chronologisch. Ook

beargumenteert hij overtuigend de noodzaak van een nieuwe uitgave na de eerder (1962, 1982) verschenen editie door Rob Nieuwenhuys van delen van Van der Tuuks correspondentie. Het ware voor de lezer echter nuttig geweest deze kennis al aan het begin van het boek, dus voor de inleiding, gekregen te hebben. Tenslotte verantwoordt Groeneboer de wijze van uitgeven van de correspondentie.

Hij heeft voor zijn uitgave gekozen voor de, in geval van historische bronnen niet ongebruikelijke, kritisch-normaliserende methode, omdat hij aan de beoogde brede doelgroep van taalkundigen, historici, antropologen, veldonderzoekers, Indonesiëkenners en andere vakmatig geïnteresseerden een goed leesbare tekst wilde bieden. Onder de problemen die haast elke edituur van bronnen heeft te overwinnen, had Groeneboer er wel een hele bijzondere op te lossen. In de periode 1855-1857 stuurde Van der Tuuk een serie brieven waarin hij de stomme e geheel had weggelaten, hetgeen het lezen en editeren van de brieven er niet eenvoudiger op maakte (voorbeeld in Bijlage V, pp. 858-9). Groeneboer verklaart (p. 251, onder 'Vindplaats') deze eigenaardigheid uit Van der Tuuks enthousiasme over de schrijfwijze van het Batak, maar het illustreert tevens, zoals de hele correspondentie, de vrije houding die Van der Tuuk innam ten opzichte van zijn werkgever, het NBG.

De correspondentie van in totaal 264 documenten is doorlopend genummerd, chronologisch gerangschikt en onderverdeeld in vijf perioden: 1. Voorbereiding in Nederland, 1843-1849 (nrs. 001-016); 2. Naar de Bataklanden, 1849-1857 (nrs. 017-084); 3. Tussenverblijf in Amsterdam, 1857-1868 (nrs. 085-179); 4. Naar de Lampongse Districten, 1868-1869 (nrs. 180-203); 5. Naar Bali, 1870-1873 (nrs. 204-264). De brieven zijn voorzien van een uitstekend en uitgebreid notenapparaat, waarin een schat aan zinvolle informatie is samengebracht. Steeds is hier ook de vindplaats van het betreffende document vermeld. In de bijlagen zijn andere stukken gepubliceerd, waaruit we Van der Tuuk beter leren kennen. Hieronder zijn de brieven ter aanbeveling van Van der Tuuk aan het NBG en enkele persoonlijke herinneringen van tijdgenoten. Ook zijn enkele stukken opgenomen die op basis van tekstmateriaal van Van der Tuuk zijn vervaardigd.

Deze bronnenuitgave maakt het nu voor het eerst mogelijk om voor de periode 1847-1873 een duidelijk beeld te krijgen van de eigenzinnige Van der Tuuk. Dat was op grond van de eerder uitgegeven, fragmentarische brieveneditie van Rob Nieuwenhuys (*Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk; De pen in gal gedoopt; Brieven en documenten verzameld en toegelicht*, 1962, Amsterdam: Van Oorschot; tweede herziene druk in 1982, Amsterdam: Querido) om verschillende redenen eigenlijk niet mogelijk. Allereerst bevat deze teveel fouten in transcriptie en annotaties en is dus voor wetenschappelijk onderzoek minder goed bruikbaar. Maar nog belangrijker is dat de selectie van het materiaal teveel in dienst heeft gestaan van het beeld dat Nieuwenhuys van Van der

Tuuk wilde schetsen. De grote verdienste van Groeneboer is dat hij met deze complete bronnenuitgave nu de lezer in staat heeft gesteld om zich zelf, tenminste voor de jaren 1847-1873, een beeld te vormen van leven en werken van deze bijzondere wetenschapper.

William Atkins, *The politics of Southeast Asia's new media*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002, xii + 235 pp. ISBN 0.7007.1516.9. Price: GBP 50 (hardback).

EDWIN JURRIËNS

This book is about the politics of the media in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand – the five core states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – during the decade 1990-2000. It focuses on the policies adopted by national and international political institutions and media organizations in response to the internationalization of the Southeast Asian media landscape. The book shows that these policies were of a highly pragmatic nature and often had complex and unpredictable results. It provides a convincing argument against the technological determinist notion that the liberalization of the communications industry necessarily leads to the liberalization of discourse, or to democracy. At the same time it propagates, and accurately illustrates, the benefits of the 'interdependence model' in media studies, which accounts for multiple layers or unexpected outcomes of media events and processes of decision making (pp. 6-7, 48, 218).

The book evolves around four major stages in the development of the Southeast Asian media landscape: 1. the evolution of regional media cultures in the early post-colonial period; 2. the 'discovery' of Southeast Asia by the international communications industry; 3. the reassertion of state control in response to the internationalization of the media; 4. the Southeast Asian media during the economic crisis of 1997-1998. Two separate chapters discuss the roles of governments and media organizations in two national crises: Bangkok, May 1992, and Jakarta, June-August 1996. The exploration of these heightened moments of crisis is meant in the first place to highlight frictions between transnational business activities and national politics, but Atkins also notes the existence of pacts and agreements between national governments and foreign media institutions. In connection to the general field of media studies, he rightly observes that 'while the evidence of arrangements between governments and transnational media corporations is relatively obtainable – especially where it involves conflict – routinized elements of the

relationship or those where interests converge under institutional structures are more difficult to identify and analyze' (p. 74). The book unravels the character of these arrangements and relationships by using sources ranging from media reports, policy documents and industry publications to personal interviews with government and industry players.

The main medium focused on in the book is television. The development of television industries in Southeast Asia began in the 1950s, keeping pace with, and becoming a crucial factor in, the nation-building efforts of the region's newly independent states (Chapter 2). Right up to the 1990s 'the television sector remained consistently more a voice of the state than did the press – a reflection of both the print medium's heritage predating the post-colonial state and its private ownership base' (p. 15). During the latter half of the 1980s, the Southeast Asian states were forced to develop strategies for facing the anticipated internationalization of television. Atkins argues that the policies of states were often very contradictory: on the one hand the shared concept of 'Asian values' was used as a weapon against the Westernization of home cultures through communications, but on the other hand each state individually tried to gain economic benefits from international communications by presenting itself as the premier regional 'communications hub'. Problems also arose within states, with ministries of information attempting to block transnational information flows while ministries of telecommunications supported open-border policies (Chapter 3).

In order to give shape to their ambiguous 'open economy/closed society' approach, Southeast Asian nations developed policies that forbade private ownership of equipment for the direct reception of international satellite signals. A more successful strategy was to deflect the attention of audiences from purchasing this equipment by offering them the alternative of domestic multichannel environments. States abandoned the idea of exclusively government-owned television and allowed the creation of national commercial television channels. International channels could also be part of the new multichannel systems, as long as they agreed with the conditions set by the national governments. While governments reasserted their control, international players such as Rupert Murdoch with his News Corporation distanced themselves from earlier statements about a causal link between satellites and democratization and took commercial advantage of the chance to develop discrete nation-specific services in collaboration with domestic, government-linked 'sultans of satellite' or 'media moguls' (Chapters 5 and 6).

During the economic crisis of 1997-1998, the transnational media once again changed its stance by starting to criticize the 'Asian miracle' and the celebrated East and Southeast Asian models for economic development, and pleading for more transparency in accordance with international business norms (Chapter 8). Nevertheless, Atkins remarks that it 'cannot be wholly

unexpected for international media corporations to systematically vet the emerging new élites for opportunities to again take a place in the media gate-keeping order' (p. 204). The real losers in the internationalization of Southeast Asian communications have been international public service broadcasters such as BBC World, which saw their position marginalized due to regional political and commercial resistance as well by a lack of economic and political support from their home governments (p. 144). If satellite broadcasting and other types of modern communication were ever potential agents of democratization, the decline of public services has seriously undermined that potential.

Atkins provides a very clear insight into the contradictions, pragmatism and politics of the international communications industry at the macro-level. His book gains extra strength through its comparative analysis of the media environments of different Southeast Asian countries. Rather little attention is paid to transnational services other than satellite television (such as radio and the internet), or to the international circulation of 'small' media such as videos, VCDs and audio cassettes. The book also contains hardly any analysis of media texts, audiences, and practices on a meso- or micro-level. What makes it indispensable, however, is precisely the fact that it puts studies that do address these latter issues in a wider political and economic context.

Poline Bala, *Changing borders and identities in the Kelabit Highlands; Anthropological reflections on growing up in a Kelabit village near an international frontier*. Kota Samarahan, Sarawak: Unit Penerbitan Universiti Malayasia Sarawak, Institute of East Asian Studies, 2002, xiv + 142 pp. [Dayak Studies Contemporary Society Series 1.] ISBN 983.925717.X. Price: USD 13.40 (paperback).

VICTOR T. KING

This is an intriguing study which addresses issues to do with the modes of representation of 'otherness', the problematical authority with which anthropologists can claim to speak about and for other cultures, and the status and role of the native anthropologist as both 'insider' and 'outsider'. This brief monograph commences with a most interesting Prologue (pp. 1-11) in which Poline Bala provides us with a personal and impassioned account of her attempts to understand and come to terms with anthropology as an academic discipline and to study the culture and perspectives of her own community, the Kelabit of the northeastern highlands of the Malaysian state of Sarawak. The experience was clearly emotionally draining in the tensions

which she faced between her personal attachments to her family, friends and neighbours and the need to describe as faithfully as possible to an outside academic audience their cultural world and the perspectives and meanings embedded in their everyday lives. Bala opts for autobiographical ethnography, and her account describes vividly her personal and academic struggle, her feelings of being overwhelmed, confused, intimidated, exhausted and upset in confronting the enormity and complexity of her task. At one point she recalls her disappointment, alarm and pain when a non-Kelabit ethnographer had 'misinterpreted and misunderstood certain unspoken sensitivities surrounding a particular cultural greeting amongst the Kelabit' (p. 4). She does not indicate whether or not the ethnographer responded to these criticisms, and if she did, in what terms.

The main themes of Bala's empirical study – she emphasizes that she is not making a contribution to social theory – are the changing meanings and perceptions of borders, boundaries and identities among the Kelabit. In other words, she is concerned with the ways in which boundaries are constructed and represented, and their consequences. These are not merely politico-territorial and ethnic borders, but also borders between 'self' and 'other', between anthropologist and native, observer and observed, dominant culture and minority culture, the 'exploiter' and the 'exploited'. She also sets out for us a diverse range of social and cultural spaces and their boundaries for investigation, including the hearth, family unit, longhouse, village, ricefield, relatives, downriver and upriver people, as well as such concepts as boundary marker (*tung*) and meeting place (*apu*). The book is an extensively revised version of the author's MA thesis submitted to Cornell University in 1999. Bala says that she left the Kelabit Highlands in 1985, though she has returned frequently for visits to family and friends since then, in addition to a more extended period of research in 1995. Her focus was her own village of Pa'Umur.

In addition to her concerns about the relationships between investigator and informants and the ambivalent position of the native researcher, her main argument about the changing significances of the international boundary between Malaysian Borneo and Indonesian Kalimantan is a relatively straightforward one. It has particular importance for the Highland Kelabit because the boundary cuts through and separates populations of the same ethnic and cultural stock – those who are family and relatives (*lun ruyung*). Bala refers to her own emerging awareness of this political, and indeed economic, divide in, for example, her geography lessons at school, and through the stories, songs, genealogies and recollections of her informants, she demonstrates how the creation of the formal division between Brooke Sarawak and Dutch Borneo eventually came to imprint itself on the minds of the Kelabit. She suggests that a key set of events in this process of boundary formation and the creation of political consciousness was Indonesian Confrontation

against the incorporation of the British colonies of Sarawak and North Borneo into the Federation of Malaysia between 1963 and 1966, and the transformation into 'Indonesians' of her kinfolk on the other side of the border. So a familiar theme in the anthropology of Southeast Asia – and that is the change from conceptualizations of unbounded space, fluid boundaries and shifting frontiers, and from openness, interactions and networks, to demarcated territories set down on maps and protected, policed and monitored by separate sovereign states – is pursued in this personal account of a small, and up until recently, relatively isolated Dayak community in interior Borneo.

The monograph makes for an interesting read. It is well written and presented, though at times it has the feel of a postgraduate thesis, and some maps could have benefited from clearer reproduction. Bala also leaves us at times with some tantalizing observations, but indicates, as a native anthropologist, that she is unable to talk about these in any detail, and in some cases she has had to be very selective in what she is prepared to say because of local sensibilities. Therefore, the reader can only guess at the reasons for and character of certain processes and events. In my view the Institute of East Asian Studies at UNIMAS is to be congratulated for getting its Contemporary Society Series off to a successful start with Poline Bala's 'personal odyssey'.

Bernard Sellato, *Innermost Borneo; Studies in Dayak cultures*. Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2002, 221 pp. ISBN 2.914936.02.8. Price: SGD 42 (paperback).

HAN KNAPEN

This 'unassuming little book', as the author calls it (p. 17), makes available in English translation a lot of the material on central Borneo already published by Bernard Sellato in French, together with other previously published and unpublished material. *Innermost Borneo* is a collection of 13 articles, papers, and essays focusing on the interior peoples of the upper Mahakam and Kapuas (and in particular the Aoheng), although a few chapters deal with the island as a whole. In 221 pages the reader is guided through many fascinating aspects of life in the interior of Borneo, traversing subjects as diverse as traditional rituals, historical migrations, social stratification, and ethnogeology. The 30 years in which Sellato has been engaged with Borneo, and in which he became the adopted son of a prominent Aoheng ritual leader and a village council elder, add up to a unique experience and have generated a wealth of material that gives rise to fascination for the island and its people.

The book begins with a text that first appeared as an introduction to the

abridged Indonesian translation of the monumental book *In Centraal Borneo* by Nieuwenhuis (1900). This text deals with the first Western attempts to obtain access to the interior of the island and describes the scientific significance of Nieuwenhuis's explorations. The two chapters that follow sketch the ethnic and cultural situation of the upper Kapuas area in 1995 and the upper Mahakam area in 1979. Detailed lists of all ethnic groups and villages are provided, including the number of inhabitants and many other details. Current statistics, however, are not given, and although certainly of historical value, the population figures for the Mahakam area in particular are now much outdated. In Chapter 4, the last of the more introductory chapters, Sellato deals with the use and control of forest resources by the Punan Tabung and Aoheng, and with the recent conflicts that arose when government officials started to challenge customary ownership and supported attempts by outsiders to gain access to these resources. Initially, Sellato was of the opinion that the encroaching outsiders would be detrimental to the sustainability of resource exploitation as traditional management of resources made way for overexploitation by outsiders. In his postscript, however, he states that 'further acquaintance with the Aoheng and the Punan of Tabang' led him to revise this idea, and even concludes that 'notions of "sustainable exploitation of natural resources" and "sustainable development" in situations such as that prevailing for interior Kalimantan's forest products have become simply meaningless and should be done away with' (pp. 64-5).

Chapter 5 deals with the forms of social organization found among the ethnic groups of Borneo: nomads, non-stratified agricultural societies, stratified societies, and the coastal sultanates. What then follows is an evaluation of Levi-Strauss's concept of the 'society of the house', but unfortunately this concept itself is poorly explained, and references to it are absent from the bibliography. Sellato concludes that the concept only applies to some of Borneo's societies: the stratified societies, the sultanates, and some non-stratified groups. In fact, the Bornean 'house' should be considered as a system of 'houses', 'encased in one another, like a nest of Russian dolls' (p. 87). The village, a group of longhouses, a longhouse itself, or a household can all be regarded as 'houses'. Social organization is further scrutinized in Chapter 6, which is an in-depth study of the wide variety of linguistic terms used for in-laws in central Borneo, and in which Sellato investigates the correlation between the process of sedentarization on the one hand, and changing post-marital residence practices on the other. Sellato suggests that the complex affinal terminology structure encountered today in central Borneo is connected to the transitional phase of sedentarization of nomadic groups. The nomads, originally utrolocal, gradually settled down and adopted uxori-locality from their settled neighbours, while also importing affinal terminological categories from neighbouring groups or from agriculturalists elsewhere.

The next two chapters deal with the cultural history of central Bornean hunter-gatherers. Chapter 7 investigates the origin of the hunter-gatherer groups on the island. Based on ethnohistorical, linguistic and cultural arguments, Sellato refutes the idea of 'devolution' that has been put forward by others, and introduces an alternative view of a Neolithic colonization of the interior by Austronesian-speaking hunter-gatherers and horticulturalists. This is a very important piece of work, not so much because it presents a complete and undisputable reconstruction of Borneo's past, but because it provides valuable insights that can be used for comparison with other regions, and against which new historical findings can be tested. The scope of investigation in Chapter 8 is much narrower. Here Sellato analyses a short manuscript, written by a Bukat leader in 1982, describing and commenting on one of the Bukat legends. As Sellato states, 'we have here a rare clear Southeast Asian example – and in written form – of an in-the-process manipulation of the historical tradition by a hunting-gathering society' (p. 139). This, Sellato argues, seems to be related to the nomads' ongoing adaptation to a settled way of life. While reading the article, I wondered what the Punan leader or other Bukat would think of Sellato's interpretation. Unfortunately my curiosity was not answered.

With Chapter 9, the focus shifts from historical to cultural themes. Based on detailed historical reconstructions, Sellato shows how the Aoheng ethnic entity came into being through complex processes of migration, splitting off, and intermingling of cultural groups over a period of two centuries. Crucial for the Aoheng's coherence and identity, Sellato argues, was a ritual called *pengosang*, which became the focus of ethnic identification and a 'statement of ethnicity' (p. 190). Chapters 10 to 13 are succinct essays examining Aoheng religion and the role played by women and men in rituals, an Aoheng purification ritual involving the sacrifice of a pig, an (all too brief) overview of the forms of traditional Aoheng oral literature including an example of an Aoheng folktale, and finally a fascinating investigation into Aoheng ethnogeology describing how the Aoheng perceive the mineral world and examining the concept of 'stone' in Aoheng religion.

As already noted, the book is a collection of a wide variety of published and unpublished material. The 13 chapters demonstrate that over the past 30 years Sellato has without doubt become one of the most knowledgeable anthropologists dealing with the interior of Borneo. Any serious scholar interested in central Borneo should read this book, which also provides plenty of interesting material for comparative analysis with other regions in the world.

It seems to me, however, that Sellato misses one of his main targets, that of making traditional life in the interior of Borneo better understandable to the Western public and making 'the Aoheng and their neighbours appear

less foreign, less "exotic", and more familiar, more "normal", to a Western reader' (p. 14). The book is rather technical at many points and occasionally goes into extreme detail, and is therefore not really suited to a broad public. For instance, terms like uxorilocality or anisogamic marriages are explained either not at all, or only half way through the book. Some chapters contain so much detail that only very motivated readers will remain interested, for instance where the distribution of ethnic groups or historical migrations are discussed. In order for Sellato to achieve his goal, it would have been better if the collection of articles had been reworked into an integrated anthropological monograph. Apart from some very minor editing of the text and bibliographies, and several brief postscripts in which some recent developments are mentioned, the chapters have not really been integrated, nor have they been updated with new insights. This volume shows that Sellato possesses a wealth of material and knowledge on the interior peoples of Borneo which would enable him to write a great anthropological monograph on the Aoheng that would fit his goal of making Borneo more familiar to a wider public.

Rudolf Mrázek, *Engineers of happy land; Technology and nationalism in a colony*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002, xvii + 311 pp. [Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History 15.] ISBN 0.691.09161.7. Price USD 70 (hardback); ISBN 0.691.09162.5. Price: USD 24.95 (paperback).

MICHAEL LAFFAN

This book fuses some of the author's previous articles together with new writings to form a beautifully crafted and idiosyncratic take on Indies society and its love affair with the modern in addition to a largely unmentioned imagining of the nation. In five chapters based on different forms of technology and their élite engineer advocates, Mrázek shows in a remarkably intimate way how the Dutch insulated themselves within their colonial world and rendered Indonesia and Indonesians as picturesque, distant, and framed subjectivities.

The five chapters are concerned with 1. touching the ground and movement; 2. architecture; 3. optics; 4. fashion and the body; and 5. telephone and radio. This quintet of subjects treated through close attention to numerous popular colonial magazines; as well as to the accounts of the engineer-explorers whose life interests often crossed over these various fields. The book is then completed with an epilogue on the famous former exile, Pramoedya.

Throughout, Mrázek summons up an image of how Indonesians were

visualized by the Dutch, who slowly made the Indies 'theirs' as they laid train tracks through the jungle, sat in their well-ordered homes (air-conditioned ideally), and listened to their radios as the sun went down over their elevated water-towers. From their trains, the humid and ruddy colony was transformed into a picture of *mooi Indië*, the beautiful Indies, in which Dutch housewives were increasingly urged to abandon the sarong and make clear to all what civilization they represented.

But whereas the Dutch used so many of the techniques Mrázek describes to make themselves distant (and safe) observers 'floating' over a volatile world, he demonstrates how Indonesians were adept at making these technologies their own, and, as an indigenous class of engineers arose, subverting them. He shows, for example, how Indonesians were to make use of trains and newspapers, and even to take advantage of air travel. Of course the gross inequalities of their society were laid bare by these technologies, as natives sat in the cheaper seats or were mapped and discovered by colonial town planners and inoculators. However in the area of dress, Mrázek's 'Indonesian dandy' could take Western uniforms (livery) and styles and make them his own statement of identity.

Indonesians too were eager listeners to broadcasts from colonial studios with their apartheid of air-conditioned (Dutch) and non-air-conditioned (Native) chambers. In chapter five the radio is used to examine the changing mentality of the colonizers, divided by distance from the metropole, yet participating in its culture. It is both amusing and poignant when Mrázek notes that the last advertisement for a radio specifically designed for the Netherlands Indies was for a model able to function in the jungle (to which the Dutch might soon have to flee from the Japanese) (p. 171).

Indeed Mrázek's account begins in the jungle, and such internal cross-referencing is all part of the web of objects and practices that pulls the book together so nicely. At a glance this might seem random, yet it feels as though Mrázek is deftly doffing his cap to Pramoedya, who seems to have his own penchant for echoing seemingly innocuous pieces of information. This is notable from Mrázek's account, when he quotes Pram's claim to have put on 28 kilos in Holland (p.201), whilst his later New Order dandy jailer managed to lose the same amount through surgery (p. 216).

At first, I felt that the inclusion of the chapter on Pramoedya's exile did not sit so seamlessly with the rest of the work. However Mrázek makes the link, describing Pram's own early desires to join the august ranks of the radio technicians and his experience at the hands of the New Order regime, which owes so much of its technical proficiency to Dutch forebears. I also wanted to hear more of the Indonesian voices in the story, and much of the material on the pseudo-Dutch *flâneurs* could sit beside descriptions of *flâneurs* of a different kind: the Kaum Muda, who emulated the fashions and technologies

of idols in Istanbul or Cairo. But that is nationalism of another sort, different from the powerful mix articulated in Mrázek's book, which is a rewarding and insightful read that will be of use well beyond the jungles of Indonesian historiography.

Michael Francis Laffan, *Islamic nationhood and colonial Indonesia; The umma below the winds*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, xvi + 294 pp. [SOAS/RoutledgeCurzon Studies on the Middle East 1.] ISBN 0.415.29757.5. Price: GBP 65 (hardback).

JOHAN MEULEMAN

In this reworked version of his 2001 University of Sydney doctoral dissertation, which won the Asian Studies Association of Australia President's award for the same year, Michael Francis Laffan analyses the development, in the attitude and discourse of the Muslim population of the Dutch Indies, from ecumenism to nationhood. He criticizes the dominant explanation, offered by authors including B.J.O. Schrieke, C. Benda, W.F. Wertheim, B. Anderson, and various later authors, that Indonesian nationalism developed primarily under the influence of Western ideas and/or socio-economic transformations. In the gradual development of Indies nationalism, Laffan rather stresses the role of Islam as a major factor, more especially the ambiguous and changing contacts of Indies pilgrims and students of Islamic religious sciences with the Hijaz and Cairo.

Among the characteristics that enhance the scholarly value of this book are its frequent discussion of previous scholarly work in the field and Laffan's clear explanation of disagreements. Benedict Anderson's *Imagined communities; Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (1983; revised edition: London, Verso, 1991) is an important case in point. Laffan does adopt Anderson's idea that the development of an 'imagined community' is a key factor in the development of nationhood, but, contrary to Anderson, he attributes a major role to religion and to interaction with Middle Eastern Muslim centres in this process, rather than to contacts with Western civilization, education, and script.

Laffan also refers to various concepts and research themes that play prominent roles in contemporary social sciences and humanities in general, such as identity, modernity, alterity (or 'Otherness') and the interaction between globality and locality. However, he would have enhanced the interest of his book if he had linked up more clearly with some of these general scholarly debates, instead of merely using the concepts. The reader would

also have appreciated more elaborate definitions and discussions of some of the key concepts of this book, such as *ecumene* and *nationhood*. In the case of *ecumene*, for example, the author does refer to C.A. Bayly and his use of the same concept in the meaning of a single community of thought, exchange, and communication (pp. 2-3), but the meaning of this central concept in Laffan's own work nevertheless remains unclear. On the one hand, the religious dimension of the Jawi *ecumene* is underscored throughout the book; on page 234, however, it is the linguistic and ethnic dimensions that are contrasted with religion, which allegedly became a basis of solidarity at a later, post-*ecumene* stage.

The direct subject matter of the book, on the contrary, is treated in much detail and very well documented. The author has even included references to publications that appeared after the original version of his book was submitted as an academic dissertation. Whereas scholarly concepts such as *ecumene*, *nationhood*, *identity*, and *modernity* are not discussed extensively, the development of various concepts and terms used by the Indies Muslim population which is the subject of the book, such as *watan*, *tanah air*, *bangsa*, *nusa*, and *ummat*, is. The work is not only interesting for its main argument and the new light which it sheds on the origins of Indonesian nationalism. It also offers a wealth of facts and analyses pertaining to the development of Islam in the Dutch Indies, the Hijaz, and Cairo. This wealth, unfortunately, sometimes tends to obscure the general argument of the book, which is explained, repeated, or summarized very well in certain passages and at the beginning of a few – not all! – chapters, but becomes less clear in other places.

One of the most interesting elements of Laffan's analysis is his understanding of the process he studies as a complicated one, in which not only multiple successive stages may be distinguished, but also various parallel developments, which met at decisive moments. This is why his book, although concentrating on religion, also discusses language and script. This is also the reason why the argument through the successive chapters not only moves chronologically from more distant to more recent periods, but also zigzags between the Hijaz, Cairo, and Southeast Asia and lays particular stress on the importance of the merging, in the first decades of the twentieth century, of Sumatran and Javanese reformisms, each with its own experiences, network, language, and script. Within this broader framework, and referring to the works of Victor Turner and Abderrahmane El Moudden, Laffan develops two of the most interesting theoretical elements of his study: his analysis of the hajj as an ambivalent – or ambiguous – experience, and his portrayal of the participation of Indies Muslims in various concentric levels of community, namely as Javanese or Sumatran, as 'Jawi' (Southeast Asian Muslims), and as members of the global Muslim community.

In view of his refined understanding of the process of nationhood forma-

tion in the Dutch Indies, one must regret that Laffan tends to overstate his argument: if his refutation of theories that attribute the process entirely to Western influences and/or ignore the religious factor in it is convincing, the impression conveyed in certain parts of his own book that Islam and interaction with the Middle East explain the whole process is itself also open to refutation. Other passages, in fact, show that Laffan knows better. In some of them he emphasizes that the development of Indonesian national consciousness should be understood as the result of a growing awareness of a double difference: Indonesians are different both from a Muslim non-Indies Other, and from a colonial non-Muslim one. More indirect hints in the same direction include his remark that the creation of the *Jamiah Setia Pelajar* in Cairo in 1912 mirrors the foundation in 1908 of an association of Indies students who had been brought to Leiden in the framework of the Ethical Policy, as well as his attention to the French influence on Egyptian intellectuals in about the same period. The fact that Laffan's discussion of the relation between Indies Muslims and Indies (indigenous) non-Muslims remains almost entirely limited to a few short remarks relating to the creation of *Pancasila* and to contemporary issues also implies that the book leaves some questions unanswered.

The book also contains a few weaknesses of a more secondary order. Laffan's characterization of the Islamization of the 'lands below the winds' as a process of 'negotiation' (!) between rulers, their subjects, and Islamic religious scholars (p. 11) is most cryptic. His judgement of the attitude of the Dutch authorities towards reformist schools in Sumatra as benevolent (p. 174) requires reconsideration in view of the colonial policy against 'wild schools' – including reformist ones. Contrary to what appears to be suggested on page 115, the use of the title of Caliph by late nineteenth-century sultans was nothing new to the Ottoman dynasty; it was the pan-Islamic ambitions of the Ottomans which were new in this period.

Michael Laffan's book is highly recommended not only for those interested in the history of Islam and the Muslim community in Southeast Asia, or in Indonesian nationalism, but also for scholars of society and religion interested in nation formation and in the role of religion in politics. Unfortunately Curzon, formerly known for its accessibility for authors and affordability for readers, nowadays (as RoutledgeCurzon) appears to focus on hardback editions sold at prices prohibitive to the non-institutional buyer. A much cheaper paperback edition of Laffan's work would not only render a great service to the public, but might very well be in the commercial interest of the publisher too. Finally, the fact that this book has appeared as the first publication in a new SOAS/RoutledgeCurzon series on the Middle East proves that Islamic Studies are in need of many more solid works that are critical of established opinions.

Among the many interrelated topics addressed in Laffan's book, the

interaction between informers and scholarly or administrative reporters is particularly fascinating. We should look forward to the results of Laffan's further research in this field.

Heidi Dahles, *Tourism, heritage and national culture in Java; Dilemmas of a local community*. Leiden: International Institute for Asian Studies/Curzon, 2001, xvii + 257 pp. ISBN 0.7007.1520.7. Price: GBP 45 (hardback).

RUDOLF MRÁZEK

There is some optimism in Dahles' book. 'Local communities are not passive'; 'tourism is a double-edged sword' (p. 8). The unlicensed tourist guides, in the end, absorb a labour force that would otherwise be unemployed (p. 208). 'The celebration of Western consumerism by the unlicensed guides of Yogyakarta heralds the collapse of the government orchestrated *pancasila* [state ideology] tourism' (p. 24). The chapters of the book guide the reader from the New Order regime (1966-1998) deployment of tourism 'as the engine of modernization' to the oppressive regime's collapse through non-passive forces. Some 'winds of change' are noticed in the Epilogue (p. 231). At the same time, the book's mood teeters on the verge of a collapse much more extensive than the change of the Suharto regime into the Habibie regime and then the Wahid regime: an absolute collapse, when all the (tourist) people will be swept into the abyss of the apocalyptic moment when Yogyakarta becomes 'out of fashion' (p. 82). This teetering gives Dahles' book an appeal of its own, and the value of a historical document.

In its author's words, the book is 'basically an ethnography of tourism' (p. ix). For anybody interested in tourism, indeed, the text is highly informative, and facts and numbers are wisely used. This review, however, first of all reflects the unexpected pleasure of a historian who got to read a wrong book. The good feeling comes from the unfamiliar approaches of a 'book about something else' to one's own research problems that often appear already 'settled' or 'overwritten'.

For instance, Mas Marco Kartodikromo and his Indonesian *dandy* heroes of the early twentieth century, figures of early nationalism, are newly recalled. Now they became the (mostly unlicensed) tourist guides of Yogyakarta: 'some wear their hair long, dress in hippie clothes [...] drink beer and rice wine, and frequent sinful places' (p. 207). They originate from *kampung* and act on the sidewalk; strikingly like their great-grandfathers in the colonial era, they are regarded by the authorities of the day with an 'exaggerated' (p.

181) alarm. As back then at the beginning of Indonesian modernity, they are chained by naming, labeled (for instance) *liar*, 'wild', a slavish (and timeless) Indonesian and post-colonial translation of the Dutch and colonial *wilde*.

Like Mas Marco's 'wild' *dandies*, Dahles' 'wild' tourist guides are sadly deficient in potential for change. They 'cannot possibly be suspected of any organized or planned subversive activities'; they 'ever refrain from making political jokes'; and 'their foremost aim is to please the tourist' (p. 210). They 'have to spend some of their money on the tourist lifestyle in which they must to some extent participate' (p. 207). They, too, are hooked on progress. They, too, eagerly read and study – from the used guide books left behind by foreign tourists. They, too, dream – about getting a ticket from a 'female (occasionally male) tourist' to her or his 'home country' (p. 179). Then they might go, 'voting with their feet' (p. 213). Indeed, this is the most real democracy they have. Large numbers of them – Yogyakarta is famous as 'the city of education' (p. 104) – expect a tourist to appear one day and to give them 'support for education and scholarship' (p. 191).

The way Dahles portrays the 'tourist infrastructure' of Yogyakarta (p. 77) helps us better to sense the landscape of Indonesian history. This is the dichotomy on which her book is based: on the one hand there is 'streetside' – 'government-controlled discourses and territories' and 'wealthier and more influential citizens living in concrete houses along the main streets of the city'; on the other hand there is *kampung*, 'urban poor dwelling in ramshackle houses cramped together higgledy-piggledy behind the main streets' (p. 94). There is, she argues, a government-constructed image of 'two different worlds' existing 'side by side' in a 'dualistic structure', 'supposed neither to converge nor to conflict'. One of these parallel worlds is 'dominant', 'developed', 'profitable', the other 'dependent', 'underdeveloped', 'traditional' (p. 124).

This is, and has been since the late-colonial period at least, a highly functional, and also theatrical (touristic) mechanism of enclosure. On the one side of the tunnel of modernity, there is an 'escape'. On this side the deepest a foreign tourist (or a scholar, or an agent of change?) can ever penetrate – whether driven by 'curiosity about *kampung* life', a 'quest for authenticity' an interest in 'alternative city tours', or even a 'process approach' (p. 123) – is merely, ever and again, 'the ugly backstage' (pp. 105, 123, 213).

The language of tourism is well heard here, and this too makes this book valuable beyond the realm of Tourism Studies. From an extensive array of government guidebooks and action plans, minutes of local travel agents' meetings, materials used by schools for tourist guides, local tourist magazines, leaflets and folders, interviews and taped 'discourses of tour guides' (p. 88), tourist language – tourist Indonesian as much as tourist-Indonesian English, German, Italian, French, and constant, easy switching among these – is heard and sensitively transcribed. Javanese and the other local languages

appear to be missing, but this, too, may reflect the Indonesian tourist-language machine clicking as it does. Late-colonial echoes, again, are heard. Catchwords of colonialism – ‘security’, ‘orderliness’, ‘hospitality’, ‘beauty’, ‘cleanliness’, in their true element in tourism – are still forcefully there (or there again), sometimes in Indonesian, at other times translated, passing over Indonesian, directly from imperial Dutch into global English (p. 29).

The voices of foreign tourists, and thus a large segment of the story, may at first seem to be missing. Soon, however, the reader realizes that Dahles’ own language and accent is that missing ‘visitor’s’ voice. The high quality of this book lies partly in the fact that its author is so extraordinarily decent and unabashed about it.

Kathleen M. Adams and Sara Dickey (eds), *Home and hegemony; Domestic service and identity politics in South and Southeast Asia*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000, 307 pp. ISBN 0.472.11106.X. Price: USD 55 (hardback).

ANKE NIEHOF

The often taken-for-granted context of everyday life, and the housework that supports it, is increasingly the subject of research by social scientists, including those working in the field of Asian studies. Current studies that focus on the domestic sphere no longer start from naive assumptions about the household as a unit in which joint utility is always maximized, and as a discrete actor clearly distinguishable by boundaries of unambiguous household membership. Instead, in the work of Naila Kabeer, Amartya Sen, Pauline Peters, Judith Bruce, Diane Wolf, and others the household is seen as a locus of both conflict *and* cooperation or as the ‘arena’ of everyday life, with permeable and shifting boundaries and embedded in external networks and relating to societal institutions. In this way, gendered intra-household inequalities with respect to authority, power, access to resources, and the values underpinning these, are made visible.

The volume under discussion fits within this evolving trend. The choice for the concept of hegemony as the analytical core of the book reflects the view of the home as a space of unequal relationships, and of positions and identities that are forged and contested, paralleling the characterization of the household as the arena of everyday life. The preference for the concept of home instead of household for denominating this space presumably derives from the more prominent association of home with the private sphere and all values attached to it. However, the work done by women who render

domestic services in somebody else's home contributes to the running of the household. The spheres of home and household indeed overlap, but while the first refers to familiarity, kinship, closeness, and emotional well-being, the second revolves around the daily provision for basic, material needs and the management of resources to this end. The fact that domestic workers are employed to contribute to the latter, but, at the same time form part of the home and share in its intimacy, leads to a continuous process of defining and negotiating positions and relations. The essays in this book uncover a rich array of mechanisms and strategies applied in this process by all parties involved, ranging from the use of kinship terminology and jesting to seeking representation in the public sphere and enhancing solidarity among domestic workers. Especially for readers who are interested in kinship as metaphor, or in kinship and hegemony, the volume provides interesting material.

In the introduction to the book the editors discuss the key concepts. They observe that studies which apply the concept of hegemony in the context of the household are rare. The work of Aafke Komter, who uses the concept in relation to the marital relationship, may be an exception. However, as already stated, studies that analyse the ways in which positions, relations and identities are negotiated and contested in the domestic sphere are less rare. The fact that none of the authors I mentioned earlier are referred to seems to indicate the existence of two parallel discourses in the social analysis of domestic space.

The first two essays in the book present case studies from India. The opening essay by Sara Dickey looks at the self-images of employers and domestic servants in the city of Madurai. The narratives of both groups have strong moral overtones, but they differ in the significance attached to class. In the study presented by Rachel Tolen on employers and servants in the railway colony of Madras, class plays a central role. This case shows that the more servants become versed in their employer's lifestyle and the more they take on the household practices of their employer (in short, the smarter they become), the more the employer feels the necessity to fortify the boundaries of class. In the essay by Saubhagya Shah on Nepal, kinship and rural-urban linkages are the dominant themes. Schooling is another. By addressing their youthful servants from the rural area in kinship terms and enabling them to go to school, the employers secure for themselves both leverage and a moral justification. Caste is ever present; having a Brahmin cook is prestigious. In the essay by Jean-Paul Dumont about 'helpers' in the Visayas (Philippines), terminology plays an important role – although not, in this case, kinship terminology. Dumont analyses the way in which meanings came to be attached to the terms referring to domestic helpers. Subtle differences in identity and status are expressed, sometimes paradoxical, in niceties of terminology. Apparently, the gap that separates 'helpers' from 'domestic workers' is a

matter of political economy, compounded by historical and cultural circumstances. This political economy includes the domestic workers overseas – the non-domestic domestic workers, so to speak.

Three essays in the volume are about Indonesia. The first, by G.G. Weix, analyses the proverbial servitude of Javanese servants in the household of a wealthy women entrepreneur, whom they typically address as *ibu* (mother) and to whom the female servants are like 'daughters-in-law'. The role of gift-giving as a mechanism for defining and confirming the employer-employee relationship is striking in this case. The second Indonesian chapter is situated in the Toraja highlands (Sulawesi). In this essay, Kathleen Adams describes how employers maintain the asymmetry in their relationship with their servants by using kinship metaphors, and how servants contest it by jesting. Kathryn Robinson, known for her publications on changing gender roles in Indonesia, describes a case in which discourses on Muslim identity, femininity, and Indonesian nationalism collide in the discussion about the position of Javanese women working as housemaids in the Middle East. The patriarchal self-image that the Indonesian New Order politicians liked to foster is undermined by allegations that they do not do enough to protect these women from abuse by their Muslim employers.

The other cases of women working overseas as domestic helpers concern the migration of Sri Lankan women to the Middle East, and Filipino domestic workers to Hongkong. The author of the first essay, Michele Gamburd, sketches a moving picture of the plight of mothers who leave their families to earn money for their own children's future by caring for somebody else's, and thereby end up losing their rights and privileges as mothers. The experience of these in some cases desperate mothers is one of fragmented motherhood. In addition, their dream of having a nice home and a prosperous family in the future may crack when the husband squanders the money sent home instead of saving it. The second essay, by Nicole Constable, is less depressing, because the Filipino women working as housemaids in Hongkong have forged a bond of solidarity and use their national identity to strengthen their agency. The other side of this coin is that some employers try to find domestic workers from other countries whom they expect to be more docile. Another essay also concerns transnational negotiations in the domestic context: the article by Louise Kidder examines the relationship between expatriate employers and their domestic helpers in Bangalore, India. Relations of hierarchy and dependency can be reversed depending on the immediate context. Expatriates may be the bosses but they are helpless in the kitchen or the market, camouflaging their dependency on the servants by referring to the latter as being childlike.

The volume ends with an essay by Karen Tranberg Hansen, who returns to the concept of hegemony. She concludes that in the domestic context,

including the relationship between employer and domestic worker, hegemonies are ambiguous. She further observes that paid domestic work has not become obsolete, but rather has increasingly transcended national boundaries and also the borderline between the private and the public sphere, thus becoming part of international political economies.

H.W. van den Doel, *Afscheid van Indië; De val van het Nederlandse imperium in Azië*. Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2001, 475 pp. ISBN 90.4460.044.3. Price: EUR 34.02 (hardback); ISBN 90.4460.043.5. Price: EUR 17.02 (paperback).

ROBERT VAN NIEL

When Soekarno and Hatta declared the independence of the Indonesian Republic in August 1945, they inaugurated a struggle that was to last until the transfer of sovereignty at the end of 1949, and the reunification under the Republic a few months later in August 1950. New Guinea remained an issue for later settlement. The events of the Indonesian struggle for independence from 1945 to 1950 have been much researched and written about. The story of these years has become a sort of classic portrayal of a former colony winning its independence from a reluctant colonial master.

The book *Afscheid van Indië* (Departure from the Indies), by H.W. van den Doel, focuses on this reluctant colonial master, the Netherlands, and its efforts to bring about something other than an independent Indonesian Republic in the archipelago. In writing about the Netherlands' side of this struggle, the author had access to several public and private archives, a twenty-volume publication of documents related to the events of these years, memoirs and biographies of many of the leading personalities, and countless secondary accounts written from every point of view. The source materials related to the struggle between the Dutch and the Indonesians are so extensive that H.A.J. Klooster published a separate bibliography of the subject in 1997 to assist scholars of the future. It is clear that the Dutch side of the struggle is more fully documented than the Indonesian side.

It must be said that Van den Doel has made good use of these sources, for his book is carefully researched and annotated. The book is also forcefully and clearly written and leaves no doubt regarding the author's feelings about the Netherlands' position in the events of 1945 to 1950. In a word, Van den Doel finds that position shortsighted and narrow-minded. He has written an exposé of what he considers a disgraceful series of policies carried out by men of limited vision. He cites the British and American policies in India

and the Philippines as more mature, farsighted and generous. Yet the Dutch negotiators were frequently ahead of public opinion in the Netherlands so that even their minimal concessions were reduced and rendered unacceptable by the government in Europe. The failure of the Netherlands' policy was not just the fault of a few negotiators; the Dutch nation shared responsibility for the flawed policies toward the Indonesian Republic. This makes the book heavy reading for persons with strong national pride. The present reviewer spent one of his student years in the Netherlands during the time period covered here and sensed the strong feelings among the people he met with regard to 'Our East Indies', where the Dutch had done so much good. Such sentiments were surely not well-informed, certainly not with regard to the nationalist movement, but they formed a strong undercurrent of feeling in the Netherlands that the East Indies should be retained. Van den Doel notes that such sentiments toward Indonesia have changed radically in the past fifty years, and I believe him. But for anyone who retains the old sentiments of a mission in the East, this book is a hard pill to swallow.

However, the book is right and the sentiments wrong, and I am in agreement with the arguments and characterizations advanced by the author. Much of the mindset of the returning Hollanders was influenced by the events of the 1920s, when the budding national movement was suppressed and opportunities for Indonesians to assume productive roles in an integrated society were removed. Colonial control would remain immovable and concede virtually nothing to the struggle for independence. By 1945 this mindset proved an obstacle to facing the reality of the post-World War II situation. The generous gesture so badly needed was not to be found.

Bruce M. Knaft, *Exchanging the past; A rainforest world of before and after*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002, x + 303 pp. ISBN 0.226.44634.4. Price: USD 55 (hardback); ISBN 0.226.44635.2. Price: USD 20 (paperback).

ANTON PLOEG

Bruce Knaft is building an impressive oeuvre. In the course of seventeen years he has published five books and a large number of papers. The first book, *Good company and violence; Sorcery and social action in a lowland New Guinea society*, was an ethnography based on his field work among the Gebusi, who live to the east of the lower Strickland River. He subsequently published *South Coast New Guinea Cultures*, a comparative study of seven cultures in both eastern and western New Guinea, and then continued with two

theoretical works. The first of these, *Genealogies for the present*, is a lengthy review of current theoretical debates in the social sciences and of their importance to anthropological practice. The second, *From primitive to postcolonial in Melanesia and anthropology*, shifts the focus to Melanesia, reviewing the trajectory of Melanesian ethnography and its relationship to anthropology at large. Knauft argues strongly in favour of the continuation of ethnographic inquiry in the postcolonial era.

The book under review results from such inquiry. It records Knauft's second period of field collaboration with the Gebusi, in 1998, after an absence of over fifteen years. In the early 1980s, Knauft writes, the Gebusi 'were far more traditional than I had a right to expect' (p. 11). The most striking feature of their way of life was their aggression towards members of their own communities. They attributed each death resulting from disease to sorcery perpetrated by a group member, often a close kin or affinal relative. If convicted by divination, he or she was liable to be killed. At the time the people were dominated by the neighbouring Bedamini; their survival as a separate cultural group seemed uncertain. When Knauft returned, most Gebusi were practising Christians. They associated sorcery with the 'world before', with a lifestyle they wanted to leave behind (p. 117). Instead, they wanted 'progress'; that is to say they wanted to participate more effectively in the modern society that Australians had started introducing in their part of New Guinea. For the Gebusi in the late 1990s, becoming 'modern' had become a moral imperative. They were still convinced about the efficacy of sorcery, but sorcery accusations were now handled by the police and might lead to jail sentences.

The Gebusi live, however, in one of the last areas to be incorporated into the state of Papua New Guinea. They have remained peripheral. Accordingly, Gebusi have painfully little chance of progressing. Knauft skilfully handles the resulting predicaments. His object of analysis is the Gebusi social world in which he rightly includes government and church representatives. His scrutiny of the roles of policemen, elementary school teachers and pastors is exemplary. Moreover, Knauft follows the trend that many other Melanesian ethnographers have recently adhered to: they are explicit about their interactions and their emotional involvement with the people among whom they carry out their research.

Knauft underestimates, in my view, the extent to which anthropologists have 'seriously engaged the impact of modernization as ideology' (p. 49). Admittedly the topic has been researched by scholars from disciplines other than anthropology, an early example being S.W. Reed with his *The making of modern New Guinea* (1942). Apart from the impact of such studies, a number of anthropologists – Belshaw, Maher, Mead, Schoorl, Schwartz and others – have addressed the issue since the Second World War. A comparative study of these efforts, undertaken by a scholar like Knauft, would be most welcome.

A major analytical tool employed by Knauff is 'agency'. In his opinion the Gebusi showed 'recessive agency', which he defines as 'willingly pursued actions that put actors in a position of subordination, passivity and patient waiting for the influences or enlightenment of external authority figures' (p. 40). He tellingly demonstrates its occurrence in practically all the contexts in which the Gebusi interact with external agents. But he also stresses that the Gebusi showed more active agency in social situations that allowed them more leeway. This was apparent especially in the staging at Nomad government station of 42 skits (not all Gebusi ones) during the 1998 Independence Day celebrations. Even though many of the skits put the pre-contact way of life in an unfavourable light, Knauff's account shows the Gebusi on this occasion as creative and reflective rather than as passive and patiently waiting. In their handling of Christianity, too, the stance taken by the Gebusi cannot be described as recessive. Their conversion, Knauff writes, was 'almost intrinsically partial' (p. 171). Not all the Gebusi converted, and converts did not stigmatize those who did not (pp. 151-2). In villages away from the government station, traditional ceremonies were still performed and converts from elsewhere attended and took part.

Knauff regrets that many Gebusi had a negative view of their previous way of life. At the same time he realizes that what he observed in 1998 might well turn out to be a phase in the Gebusi perception of their pre-contact ways. In the concluding chapter of the book, Knauff repeats his argument that ethnography remains 'crucial', not just as a record of stasis or of flux, but also as a way of documenting and comparing developmental trends. The book under review is a case in point. It is richly documented, full of theoretical asides, the 'photographic galleries' expediently complement the text, and the endnotes too are crammed with information. In short, a most commendable book.

Nicolaas George Bernhard Gouka, *De petitie-Soetardjo; Een Hollandse misser in Indië? (1936-1938)*. Amsterdam: Rozenberg, 303 pp. ISBN 90.5170.549.2. Price: EUR 18.

HARRY A. POEZE

De petitie-Soetardjo is in de Indonesische geschiedenis vastgelegd als een gemiste laatste kans van het Nederlandse koloniale bestuur om tot overeenstemming te komen met het Indonesische nationalistische streven. Op 15 juli 1936 diende het gezagsgetrouwe, maar kritische Volksraadlid, eerder een hoog bestuursambtenaar in de inheemse rangen, en van traditioneel-aristocratische achtergrond, zijn voorstel in waarin op termijn – van tien jaar, een

tijdsbepaling die later werd weggelaten – werd gevraagd om zelfstandigheid voor Indië. Al te veel aandacht of enthousiasme trok de petitie niet. In de Volksraad was de Nederlandse rechterzijde tegen, evenals de Indonesische nationalistische fractie – het ging te ver of lang niet ver genoeg. Het was een verrassing dat het voorstel werd aanvaard, met 26 tegen 20 stemmen op 29 september 1936, dankzij onverwachte steun van het Indo Europeesch Verbond en Indonesische nationalisten – uit zeer verschillend motief.

Den Haag moest antwoorden, en vroeg daartoe advies aan gouverneur-generaal Tjarda van Starkenborgh, die er pas na twee jaar in slaagde zijn overwegingen om de petitie af te wijzen te formuleren – ten dele naar het lijkt een bewuste verdragingsactie. Hij was van mening 'dat in Indië alles goed en ordelijk geregeld was en dat er dus geen aanleiding was om tot veranderingen over te gaan'. Ambtelijke adviezen om door andere maatregelen aan de teneur van de petitie tegemoet te komen werden door Tjarda genegeerd. Minister van koloniën Welter nam Tjarda's advies over en wees op 16 november 1938 de petitie per Koninklijk Besluit af.

Gouka promoveerde op deze eerste uitgebreide studie naar de petitie, waarbij hij zelfs kon teruggrijpen op eigen vage herinneringen aan de petitie, waarover hij tijdens zijn Indische jeugd hoorde.

De opbouw is grondig: achtergronden, de persoon van Soetardjo – onder invloed van zijn Indonesische bronnen naar het lijkt te rooskleurig aangezet – het voorstel, de behandeling ervan in de Volksraad, de rol van pers en propaganda, officiële afdoening en afhandeling, en de internationale context, waarna tot slot een aantal conclusies volgen.

Gouka heeft een zorgvuldige studie geschreven, waarin hij allerlei correcties aanbrengt op de bestaande opvattingen en visies – alles mild en bezaaid geformuleerd. Dat sluit niet uit dat hij bij Tjarda een groot deel van de blaam legt voor de afwijzing van de petitie, na een zelfs voor de stroperige koloniale besluitvorming extreem lange periode, en zonder ook maar het tonen van enig begrip voor de motieven ervan. Zijn vetgedrukte slotconclusie (p. 257) luidt: 'De misser was het niet onderkennen door de Nederlandse regering en de Staten-Generaal van de diepere achtergrond van de petitie-Soetardjo en daardoor het verzuim tot een redelijk alternatief te komen voor het afgewezen verzoek.

Gouka is over Tjarda heel duidelijk, maar nuanceert dit door toe te voegen dat zijn 'standvastige houding tegenover de Japanse bezetting van Indië respect verdient'. Los van de juistheid hiervan is dit een vergoelijking die in dit verband irrelevant is. Gouka's opmerkingen over de verhouding tussen Tjarda en minister van koloniën Welter dragen daarnaast nog meer argumenten aan die doen uitzien naar een studie over Tjarda en zijn Indische landvoogdij.

Jaap Harskamp (compiler), *The Indonesian question; The Dutch/Western response to the struggle for independence in Indonesia 1945-1950; An annotated catalogue of primary materials held in the British Library*. London: The British Library, 2001, xx + 210 pp. ISBN 0.7123.1127.0. Price: £ 45 (hardback).

HARRY A. POEZE

Since about 1995 Jaap Harskamp has been actively engaged, on behalf of the British Library, in building up a collection of primary source material on the relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia, focusing on the decolonization conflict from 1945 till 1949. The result of Harskamp's efforts is presented in this catalogue: 1,195 entries on publications, in the broadest sense of the word, published in western languages, each with a brief annotation. More than 900 of these publications are in Dutch, about 200 in English, while the rest are in Afrikaans, French, Frisian, German, or Indonesian. Also included are broadsheets, music scores, films, photo albums, letters, archival material, and a few journals. All the 'titles' on Indonesia published between 1945 and 1950 are listed, with a few major ones from later years. Not only are publications on the decolonization conflict included, but also novels, children's books, and a number of scholarly publications as far detached from political reality as is imaginable.

One cannot but be impressed by the sheer volume of the material collected; it attests to Harskamp's industry as well as, of course, to the liberal funding of the project. With some pride Harskamp says that only KITLV can claim to have a larger collection than the British Library. The survey, however, cannot pretend to be anything close to complete, especially when Harskamp's selection criteria are so broad.

A comparison with Klooster's *Bibliography of the Indonesian Revolution* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1997) shows that the titles that Harskamp includes, and that fit Klooster's criteria, probably cover no more than eighty percent of Klooster's titles. Harskamp, however, includes a few that escaped Klooster's scrutiny.

This catalogue, edited with great care – I noted only a few printing errors – and with sixty pages devoted to six indexes, is indeed proof of how extensive British Library holdings are on the subject. Students of the Indonesian Revolution will now have to consult this catalogue to find out whether they will need to include a London stay in their research itinerary. The question whether it was worth all the manpower and money to produce a printed catalogue in this era of 'fully searchable databases' of course crops up. The British Library decided in the affirmative, and this humble reviewer can only be pleased.

Jan Breman and Gunawan Wiradi, 2002, *Good times and bad times in rural Java; Case study of socio-economic dynamics in two villages towards the end of the twentieth century*. Leiden: KITLV Press, xii + 330 pp. [Verhandelingen 195.] ISBN 90.6718.187.0. Price: EUR 33 (paperback).

ELISABETH SCHRÖDER-BUTTERFILL

Good times and bad times in rural Java is one of those books that usually only exist on a wish list of works that 'someone ought to write, but no-one ever does'. What makes the book unique? Take two experienced researchers whose interest in a region spans several decades. Let them capture at first hand the onset of an economic crisis which rapidly goes on to become a total crisis, catalyzing far-reaching changes in a nation's society, economy, and political landscape. Then get them to investigate in depth and over a period of two years the implications of, and adaptations to, the crisis in question. Add to this the fact that they already have detailed survey and qualitative data on the two villages which they study, and you arguably have the kind of 'real-life laboratory' which social scientists dream of.

The crisis in question is, of course, the Indonesian economic crisis which began in late 1997. The book focuses on the long- and short-term dynamics of the rural economy of West Java over the last decade of the twentieth century, but placed within a broader historical framework which reaches back to colonial times. The central focus is on the welfare and livelihood options of villagers, particularly poor villagers. Immediate motivation for the study was provided by the proliferation of convenient stereotypes (held, for example, by World Bank economists) that rural areas would remain little affected by the crisis, that migrant workers who had lost their jobs in urban centres would simply slot back into the rural economies from which they came, and that informal safety nets would protect them from destitution. Against this, Breman and Wiradi provide detailed evidence to show that rural poverty levels, already higher before the crisis than official figures reflected, increased dramatically after 1997. For one thing, migrants returning to their villages were unable to find work. This should hardly surprise us: as the authors convincingly illustrate, it was the lack of rural employment opportunities that had pushed them onto the lower rungs of the urban economy in the first place. Living standards were further depressed through price rises.

According to the authors, any notion of solidarity within or across classes had long disappeared. Labour relationships between rich and poor were no longer organized by principles of patronage, but according to capitalist principles. And among the mass of poor villagers either the wherewithal to provide assistance was lacking, or the willingness to give had been eroded

by labour migration and regime-led suppression of class-based interest groups. As the authors are able to show for both villages, the social safety net programme (JPS), hastily introduced after price hikes threatened to trigger widespread riots, was totally inadequate to stem progressive immiseration of rural Java. This was not least because one third of the JPS budget disappeared into the pockets of the implementing institutions. A further third ended up with the non-poor, who regarded themselves as equally entitled to state assistance. These findings leave Breman and Wiradi with little optimism for genuine *reformasi*. Unless the position of the poor is significantly enhanced, for example through land reform and stakeholder small-scale enterprises, 'the devolution of political and executive power will result only in a legitimization of the informal supremacy of the district and village elites' (p. 308).

The book opens with a prologue (also published in the *Journal of Agrarian Change*) which summarises the main evidence and arguments. The main body of the text is divided into two sections, focusing in turn on the two research villages, each with one chapter on the pre- and one on the post-crisis situation. An epilogue draws together the main implications. The two villages, North Subang and East Cirebon, were both studied by the authors in 1989 and 1990. They provide interesting contrasts in terms of economic activities, patterns of labour relations, and migration. North Subang's economy was predominantly agricultural in 1990, and even villagers forced to seek income outside the village tended to undertake agricultural wage work ('hunting the harvest'). By 1998 non-agricultural incomes, both in and beyond the village, had increased in importance, even after taking into account the economic crisis, but the majority of villagers were still occupied in agriculture. The constriction of local work opportunities would have left women almost entirely marginalized, were it not for the rapidly growing importance in North Subang of international female labour migration. The authors provide rich detail on the procedures, costs, and problems involved in this new form of migration. Their interpretation is predominantly negative: they focus on the financial indebtedness of women upon their departure, the separation from their families, and the risks of abuse and exploitation at their destinations. Whilst these problems are undeniable, it remains the case that the fortunate few who are able to depart for foreign shores are regarded with envy for the earnings they are able to achieve. In the face of widespread underemployment after the onset of the crisis, their position appears even more privileged.

By contrast with North Subang, rice cultivation in East Cirebon has long been secondary, overshadowed by sugar-cane agro-industry which provides few attractive work opportunities to villagers. As a result labour circulation to Jakarta and its environs has had a long history. The lack of skills of the young migrants and the predominance of casual, poorly-remunerated work explains why few succeeded in settling in the city for good. Breman

and Wiradi unflinchingly portray the human costs of this modern form of nomadism: the parting from family, the constant indebtedness, the vulnerability to illness, unemployment and old age, and the virtual absence of any avenues to social mobility. Summing up the fate of landless migrants, they write that it was 'only after their physical strength had been totally burned up that [the men] returned to East Cirebon for good, unproductive and in fact just as poverty-stricken as they were at the beginning of their working life, which had now drawn to its close' (p. 199). The involvement of a large segment of the village's workforce in the urban informal sector – especially the building industry – explains why East Cirebon was eventually harder hit by the economic crisis than North Subang. After 1997, under- and unemployment became rampant, and former migrants had to count themselves lucky if they found work in the poorly-paying local brick industry.

One of Breman and Wiradi's central arguments is that village Java is becoming increasingly polarized in terms of socio-economic stratification. Whilst not denying that the rural poor also benefited from Indonesia's economic growth, they argue that the rich ensured themselves a disproportionate share via exclusionary practices encouraged by the Orde Baru's deployment of state patronage to rural elites. In my view, however, the authors undermine the persuasiveness of their position through a lack of transparency regarding how their socio-economic classifications were arrived at. Nowhere is it made explicit on what basis households were assigned to one of the four strata (upper, middle, lower, with the latter divided into poor and ultra-poor). It is apparent that the old practice of simply assigning households to 'asset classes' has been shied away from in favour of a richer, multi-dimensional definition of relative status. Yet what criteria were ultimately used, and how members of the different strata perform on these criteria, remains opaque. The difficulty of obtaining economic data from the rich is readily acknowledged, although conclusions about their wealth and relative immunity to the crisis are nevertheless drawn. (It is also worth noting that although the household survey was a key component of the research methodology, its contents, much less its actual wording, have not been disclosed in the text or in an appendix.) At one point the middle group is described as being capable of 'a certain amount of accumulation, or at least [...] able to ensure their survival from one generation to the next at a level considered by local standards as *cukup*, sufficient to lead a decent life' (p. 150). Members of the lower group, by contrast, are described as living 'in acute poverty – that is, [they] are unable to meet their minimum subsistence requirements on a regular basis' (p. 151). Later this is modified to saying that the poor have 'insufficient income to guarantee a decent standard of living', whereas the ultra-poor do not have 'the means to provide for their minimal daily subsistence requirements' (p. 152). In the absence of more concrete fleshing-out of

the different groups, or of terms like 'minimum requirements' and 'decent life', it is arguably up to the reader to decide whether she is prepared to believe that even before the crisis half of all households in the two villages were 'unable to meet their minimum subsistence requirements on a regular basis', or even just unable to lead a 'decent life'. By 1998, almost two-thirds of households are said to be in 'acute poverty' and one-quarter 'ultra-poor'.

In a household survey which I conducted in a village in East Java in early 2000, I arrived at very similar figures to Berman and Wiradi's for the size of the upper and middle groups (16 and 29 percent, compared with their 15 and 25 percent), but found fewer (11 percent) ultra-poor (E. Schröder-Butterfill, 2002, *Ageing in Indonesia: A socio-economic approach*; doctoral thesis, Department of Social Policy and Social Work, Oxford University). As the composition of the ultra-poor group is similar in East Java (the elderly, ill, and handicapped; widows; the unemployed), the difference in size may reflect genuine differences in work opportunities or safety nets. More importantly, the largest group in my village, consisting of those who were poor but not ultra-poor, saw themselves as vulnerable, but most certainly not as unable to lead a 'decent life'. They described their situation as *cukup-cukupan*, that is, devoid of accumulation, but with enough to cover daily needs and participate in the social and ritual life of the village. They were not the excluded, but rather 'the norm'. Without more information about the characteristics of Berman and Wiradi's groups, it is impossible to tell whether social stratification really differs between these villages in East and West Java, or whether we are essentially dealing with different interpretations of similar underlying realities.

The book is well written and draws the reader along nicely. At times more use could have been made of tables, and, regrettably, some of the later tables contain mistakes. The authors make excellent use of captivating photos to bring their subjects to life. Unfortunately, like well-behaved children, these subjects are seen but rarely heard. For an anthropological study, relying on in-depth and open-ended interviews as well as surveys, surprisingly little use is made of verbatim quotations or case studies of villagers. The consequences of this are not merely stylistic, but affect the reader's interpretation of people's situation. Villagers belonging to the poor strata of society are cast as passive victims of capitalist exploitation, bobbing along on the tides of time, unable to improve their lot. Very little space is given to people's attempts to endow their lives with meaning and dignity, for example, through everyday exchanges with fellow-villagers, participation in rituals, or jockeying for position within the subtle hierarchies of reputation and social status which permeate all segments of Javanese society. Despite the title, this book is really only about the bad times. For the poor, it seems, there are no good times in rural Java.

Overall, however, the book's merits are overwhelming. It is an invaluable source of fascinating detail about the rural economy of Southeast Asia's most populous, most densely settled region. It not only charts the changing nature of labour relations, economic activities, and social differentiation, but also draws attention to persisting differences between regions. The book will make a lasting contribution to our understanding of the impact of Indonesia's crisis on the lives of villagers and to our evaluation of the country's first experiences with *reformasi* and state-sponsored social security. Breman and Wiradi bear witness to the tragedy of the unutilized human potential of the millions who are unable to sell, in a regular and dignified manner, the only thing they have: their labour power.

L.P. van Putten, *Ambitie en onvermogen; Gouverneurs-generaal van Nederlands-Indië 1610-1796*. Rotterdam: ILCO-productions, 2002, 192 pp. ISBN 90.6734.021.9. Prijs: EUR 20 (gebonden).

MARIËTTE VAN SELM

Voor het tijdschrift *Moesson* schreef de historicus L.P. van Putten enkele biografische schetsen van gouverneurs-generaal van Nederlands-Indië. De reacties op die publicaties deden hem besluiten een volledige reeks biografieën in boekvorm uit te brengen. In 2002 zag het eerste deel, gewijd aan de gouverneurs-generaal uit de VOC-periode, het licht. In 2003 zal een tweede deel, handelend over de landvoogden uit de negentiende en eerste helft van de twintigste eeuw, verschijnen.

Ambitie en onvermogen opent met een inleiding waarin Van Putten zijn boek aanbiedt als vulling van een lacune, volgens hem ontstaan als gevolg van de gevoeligheid die de koloniale geschiedenis van Nederland na 1949 omgaf en de geringe interesse die in egalitair Nederland voor historische figuren zou bestaan. Overzichtswerken met betrekking tot de gouverneurs-generaal van Nederlands-Indië zagen in 1891 en 1941 het licht, daarna dreigden de mannen van 'eminente waardigheid en importante charge' in vergetelheid te raken.

In tweeëndertig schetsen van elk gemiddeld vijf pagina's brengt Van Putten de heren, van Pieter Both tot en met Willem Arnold Alting, weer voor het voetlicht. Voor een goed begrip van de tijd en context waarin de gouverneurs-generaal werkzaam waren, gaat aan de schetsen een kort hoofdstuk over het ontstaan van de VOC en de inrichting van het bestuur in Oost-Indië vooraf. Achterin het boek is – Van Putten baseerde zijn biografieën nagenoeg geheel op literatuurstudie – een literatuurlijst opgenomen.

Met de titel van zijn boek verwijst Van Putten naar wat zijn hoofdpersonen zich – al of niet in opdracht van de Heeren XVII – in Indië ten doel stelden en wat zij daarvan terecht brachten. *Ambitie en onvermogen* lijkt echter helaas ook in een ander opzicht een vlag te zijn die de lading dekt. Van Putten beoogt geïnteresseerde leken en scholieren die hun eerste stappen op de weg van (historisch) onderzoek zetten materiaal aan te bieden waaruit zij meer inzicht in de ontwikkelingsgeschiedenis van het ambtelijk bestuur in Oost-Indië kunnen opdoen. Dat is, in vergelijking tot de oppervlakkigheid van de geboden biografische schetsen, een wel erg ambitieuze doelstelling. Bovendien kan het streven naar 'toegankelijkheid op hoofdlijnen' (p. 10) niet dienen als excuus voor het raadplegen van een zeer beperkte hoeveelheid literatuur of als verontschuldiging voor feitelijke onjuistheden. Het centrale eiland van de Banda-groep was en is niet Groot Banda (p. 32), maar Naira, om een voorbeeld te noemen.

Daarnaast jaagt Van Putten met zinnen als 'Naast bestuurlijk leidinggeven spraken deze heren tevens recht' (p. 18) en 'Van Pieter Both zijn jeugdige leven is weinig bekend' (p. 24) lezers die op een correct gebruik van de Nederlandse taal prijs stellen, de rillingen over de rug. Andere taalkundige missers – 'Boven aan de trap werd ik direct geconfronteerd met een lange rij portretten van statige mannen. Toen ik dichterbij kwam bleken zij veelal in matig[e] tot slechte staat te verkeren' (p. 7) – zijn eerder lachwekkend. Voor wie het lachen als gevolg van het ontbreken van een strenge taalkundige redactie niet vergaat, is *Ambitie en onvermogen* met zijn veelheid aan illustraties een aantrekkelijk boek, waarin ook onbekende gouverneurs-generaal een heel klein beetje reliëf krijgen.

William Cummings, *Making blood white; Historical transformations in early modern Makassar*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002, xiii + 257 pp. ISBN 0.8248.2513.6. Price: USD 45 (hardback).

HEATHER SUTHERLAND

'The most essential idea argued in this book', writes William Cummings (p. 13), 'is that histories are not just records of the past, but themselves forces or agents that affect the course of development'. In this monograph he examines how the new practice of writing texts changed not just Makassarese culture, but social structure and the distribution of power. As he emphasizes in the Conclusion (p. 195), the book is not about the impact of literacy as such, but rather about how historical literacy, which probably developed in the

sixteenth century (pp. 42, 82), transformed early modern Makassar in three ways. These three processes, each of which is examined in a separate chapter, form, as Part Two, the core of the book.

In Part One, Chapter 1 sets the scene, giving brief introductions to text analysis in Indonesian historiography, and to Makassar in the early modern period. This crucial period, from the mid-sixteenth to the late seventeenth century, was when the allied kings of Gowa-Talloq (ruling what was usually known as Makassar or Gowa) consolidated their power over their internal rivals and neighbours. They then enjoyed more than a hundred years of fame and fortune before succumbing to the final attacks of their Dutch and Bugis rivals in 1669. The next two chapters consider respectively the sacral potency of texts and scripts, and the relationship between orality, written texts and Makassarese views of the past.

This last chapter of Part One, the third, raises several interesting points that are fundamental to Cummings' argument. He describes the importance of objects and places, and the overwhelming focus on origin stories, which are so characteristic of oral tradition. Beginnings, along with recent events, are regarded as much more important than providing a smooth and continuous narration linking past and present. This uneven interest in 'history' gives a characteristic 'dumbbell' shape to oral accounts, in sharp contrast to that of written chronicles, where individual rulers provide the structural focus. Each reign forms a separate episode, to be recounted and added to as the story of the dynasty unfolds. Progressive composition, the paring away of figures revealed to be irrelevant, and the faithful repetition of established texts were all characteristic of the new written genre (pp. 82-4).

Chapter 4, the first of the three chapters of Part Two, concerns social hierarchicalization, and focuses on the roles of genealogy in elaborating the complex ranking system for which the Makassarese are famous (p. 104). Cummings notes 'genealogical writing created a new social role for the past. It created the reason to record more, and in more detail with ever more focussed categories and definitions' (p. 115). The resulting 'genealogical rivalry and positioning' shaped Makassarese politics (p. 106). This question of power is the focus of the following chapter, which gives a valuable analysis of how Gowa and its texts became the 'master narrative' (p. 137), a political and moral example followed by neighbouring polities. This was linked to a profound realignment. 'Makassarese understandings of their world shifted from seeing it as a landscape of autonomous communities to one divided into a core and a periphery' (p. 128). Chapter Six, the last in Part Two, considers the codification of culture: 'custom was now objectified in material form rather than stored in the precarious memories of elders' (p. 170). Compilations of moral exhortation, Islamic texts and written laws enabled culture to be defined and to become a point of reference. 'Dogma, creed,

norms, doctrine – written texts made these conceptions possible’ (p. 194). These three chapters, about a hundred pages in all, present the central three dimensions of Makassar’s transformation.

There is much of interest in this book, and the author’s ambitions go considerably further than simply considering Makassarese texts. Among the more general aims is a desire to re-assess notions of causation in Southeast Asian history. Cummings feels that the idea that commerce was the great engine of change is somewhat one-sided (pp. 35-6, 196-8). He suggests we should consider the implications ‘if local historical writings are not construed as sources [...] but as objects and practices that themselves may have the potential to shape the world around them’ (p. 197). On ‘hieraricalization’ he notes that the myth of divine origin was the charter ‘explaining and justifying’ a new social order, allowing the conceptualization of a naturally ranked society documented in genealogies, a ‘new way of envisioning’ relationships (p. 117). On page 125 he goes further: written manuscripts ‘have the power to effect changes in their own right’. Because (p. 126) ‘they were viewed as sacred and powerful’, the writing down of genealogical relationships created ‘a significant change in mentality and a transformation that altered social behavior’. This sense of the ways in which culture – in this case artifacts – can create, reinforce or foreclose options within a society, and so change its dynamics, is convincing, but it would seem to operate on a scale somewhat different from that of ‘commerce’. This raises difficult questions: are we looking at means to an end, or autonomous forces with their own agency? Or, more likely, a dynamic symbiosis of the two?

The power of beliefs, as Cummings rightly observes, is often ignored or underestimated as it is harder to describe, let alone quantify, than military might or wealth. Nonetheless, the central fact remains that written texts were introduced, and attained their great influence, during the political rise of Gowa itself. Cummings’ description of Gowa’s cultural hegemony ably demonstrates that the intellectual and religious dimensions of state formation are both fascinating and central, that they are not mere instruments, but have the ability to compel appropriate behaviour. However, they are – as he frequently notes of history-making in general – socially embedded. Here Cummings fails to deliver in two ways. Firstly, we are given too little information about the texts themselves. It would have been extremely helpful to know more about the corpus of Makassarese writing, the distribution of genres, the creation of texts, and the specific manuscripts he used. Who produced them, for which audiences, and why? He describes some forms of manipulation (such as the omission of painful conflicts, the dropping of unglorious ancestors), and notes the importance of genealogy in competition, but fails to explicitly address the tension between this instrumental use of texts and their sacred character.

The second point is related: who were 'the Makassarese'? They are remarkably undifferentiated in Cummings' account. For example, on pages 145 and 146 he discusses how the Gowan model 'aided local rulers in domestic political rivalries', and later adds that 'other communities accepted the [Gowan] guidelines of how the past should be construed'. The use of the new cultural repertoire in conflict situations is introduced, only to evaporate into the vagueness of 'communities'. Similarly, it is perhaps indicative that Cummings uses the passive voice when answering the question as to whether or not external influences (Arab, Malay, and European), rather than literacy as such, were possible causes of Makassar's great changes. He concludes that while such outsiders may have provided models, 'the conceptual transformations [...] stemmed from the presence, accumulation and veneration of Makassarese written manuscripts' (pp. 173-4). The texts are present, and powerful, but their genesis remains obscure.

Context and contingency do influence how culture is used. Cummings gives an excellent example of this in his balanced discussion of the role of the kalompoang, the sacred objects or regalia central to many groups. Originally leaders served the kalompoang, while later rulers possessed them. There has been some debate on this, but Cummings relates their role in Makassarese areas directly to fluctuations in state power. When or where the king was strong, the kalompoang receded, but this was not a linear process: fading royal power saw a resurgence of the kalompoang's importance (pp. 68, 124, 131, 153, 193, 199). A similar analysis, applied to texts, looking at variables of time and space, would have been fascinating. It would also, of course, have been very difficult, requiring archive work and a wider exploitation of historical materials. Given the difficulty of the Makassarese language, we must not underestimate what Cummings has already achieved. However, I think it would have been possible to make more of his material by explicitly considering such questions, even if definitive answers remain elusive.

Another way in which the book could have been improved was through a somewhat different use of comparative material. There is no doubt that the author is familiar with the literature on Southeast Asia and beyond; there are frequent digressions to note interesting parallels elsewhere. But these remain incidental, noting resemblance. There are, for instance, a number of references to Bali, particularly the work of Margaret Wiener. A sustained comparison, contextualising the similarities and differences, might have generated new insights. More directly, a systematic consideration of the much more extensive Bugis canon would have been enormously useful, as occasional references to works by Pelras, Caldwell and others indicate. The space for this could easily have been created by heavy editing of some of Cummings' ruminations on the nature of history, which tend to be somewhat obvious and heavy-handed (for example, on pages 60, 96, 201-3). The desire to link

his perhaps esoteric case study to wider debates is praiseworthy, but a more concise and precise presentation might have avoided the whiff of the earnest undergraduate exercise that clings to some of these sections.

It would be unfair to end this review on that note. Cummings' book makes skillful use of relatively sparse material in an inaccessible language and difficult scripts to address serious issues. His emphasis on the power of writing to change the way people conceptualized their society, and hence their way they operated within it, is fully justified. Because it reminds us of the depth and difference of Indonesian cultures, his work should be a powerful warning against the easy assumption that 'everyone is the same', and that consequently our motives and explanations are sufficient to encompass those of all other peoples. It is to be hoped that he will have the opportunity to put the skills he has acquired, and his interest in fundamental questions, to further good use, to the benefit of us all.

Olf Praamstra, 2003, *Een feministe in de tropen; De Indische jaren van Mina Kruseman*. Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 2003, 111 pp. [Boekerij 'Oost en West'.] ISBN 90.6718.207.9. Prijs: EUR 19,95 (paperback).

GERARD TERMORSHUIZEN

De Boekerij 'Oost en West', waarin dit boek als eerste publikatie verschijnt, is het resultaat van een samenwerkingsverband van het tijdschrift *Indische Letteren*, Stichting Het Indisch Huis, het tijdschrift *Moesson*, Stichting Tong Tong en de KITLV Uitgeverij. De opzet ervan is het uitgeven van teksten die interessant zijn voor een breed publiek. Praamstra's boek is het visitekaartje van de reeks: het behandelt een aansprekend onderwerp en is prachtig uitgegeven (het mooiste dat ik ooit van het KITLV heb gezien), met heel veel foto's en ander, grotendeels origineel, illustratiemateriaal dat ditmaal – de uitgeverij schiet daarin nogal eens te kort – ook voortreffelijk werd afgedrukt. Een lees- en kijkboek beide. Een belofte voor wat er nog gaat komen.

De inhoud van het boek betreft de jaren die de roemruchte feministe Mina Kruseman (1839-1922) doorbracht in Indië, in Batavia (1877-1878) en Soerabaja (1878-1883). Hectisch waren haar Nederlandse jaren geweest: met haar boeken, polemieken en lijfelijk optreden overal in den lande had zij voortdurend in de schijnwerpers gestaan, werd zij bewonderd om haar ideeën en moed, maar ook zwart gemaakt en ronduit beschimpt. In wat zij ten slotte had bereikt voelde zij zich teleurgesteld. Op zoek naar de rust van een 'normaal' bestaan als werkende vrouw trok ze naar Indië, dat zij kende

uit haar kinderjaren. Maar al timmerde zij daar heel wat minder aan de weg dan in patria, rust was voor een excentrieke vrouw als zij een relatief begrip. Haar 'faam' was haar vooruit gesneld en vanzelfsprekend werd er al druk over haar gepraat nog voordat zij in de kolonie was gearriveerd. En dat hield natuurlijk niet op, toen ze er eenmaal was. Stellen we ons bovendien die naar omvang nog zo bescheiden Europese kolonies in Batavia en Soerabaja omstreeks 1880 voor. Meer dan vijfduizend Europeanen (met de *totoks* dan nog sterk in de minderheid) woonden er niet. Eentonig en oersaai bij gebrek aan vertier verliepen hun dagen; zij leidden een, zoals dat wel werd genoemd, 'plantenbestaan' waarin de – vaak giftige – roddel een voorname afleiding vormde in de ledige uren in sociëteit en voor- of achtergalerij.

Het was een werkzaam leven dat Mina Kruseman in haar nieuwe omgeving opbouwde: ze gaf les in zang, piano en declamatie. Daarnaast trad zij op, alleen als voordrachtskunstenares maar vaker – op muziek- en toneelavonden – met haar jonge leerlingen. Maatschappelijk werd haar verblijf een succes. De eerste jaren gaf zij ook lezingen waarin zij het – hoe kon het anders – opnam voor de door de mannenmaatschappij klein gehouden vrouw. Maar het was niet alleen het lot van de vrouw dat zij te berde bracht, haar uitspraken over emancipatie golden al evenzeer de in de koloniale samenleving ondergeschikte positie van Indo-europeanen en Chinezen, slachtoffers – zoals zij ze zag – van de westerse overheersing. Natuurlijk kreeg ze ervan langs in de Indische kranten, maar soms ook vond ze bewonderaars onder de redacteurs. Zoals de ook in andere opzichten progressieve E.F.J.J. van den Gheijn van *De Oostpost* in Pasoeroean, die onder meer schrijft: 'Verheven boven kleingeestige critiek, bestand tegen miskenning of geringschatting, schijnt haar levensdoel te zijn: *het welbegrepen geluk van het zwakste gedeelte der schone sekse*, in welk streven zij reeds een moed aan den dag heeft gelegd, welke de doodsverachting van menig krijgsheld verre in de schaduw stelt.'

In het publiek optredende persoonlijkheden die door hun norm en taboe doorbrekende ideeën en gedrag sterk de aandacht trekken, geven nogal eens aanleiding tot mythevorming. Misschien wel vooral in een roddelcultuur zoals die in de koloniën bestond. Buitenissigheden worden aangedikt, vage geruchten worden feiten; het sterke verhaal doet het immers altijd goed. Waarheid en verzinsel gaan, kortom, een onontwarbaar kluwen vormen. Wat aan zin en onzin is overgeleverd, wordt op een gegeven moment opgeschreven én nageschreven. Dit nu blijkt ook gebeurd met de zes Indische jaren van Mina Kruseman. In 1955 (zo'n zeventig jaar nadat ze Indië had verlaten!) schreef de Soerabajase journalist G.H. von Faber een korte levensschets van Kruseman, die waar het de daarin voorkomende feiten betreft door latere geschiedschrijvers steeds weer werd nagepraat en aldus min of meer tot 'officiële' waarheid werd gepromoveerd: een relaas waarin de 'dwaasheden' van Mina het dominante motief vormen, met als saillant hoogtepunt

haar samenwonen met een dertig jaar jongere man en hun beider – door de publieke opinie daartoe gedwongen – vlucht uit Soerabaja als slotaccoord. Het is een smeugig verhaal, maar dat Fabers voorstelling van zaken veel onzin bevat, ontdekte Olf Praamstra toen hem bepaalde informatie over Mina in een Indische krant onder ogen kwam. Met die Indische krant is ook meteen de bron genoemd waarmee Praamstra vervolgens aan de gang ging voor een reconstructie van Mina Krusemans leven in Batavia en Soerabaja: de Indische dagbladjournalistiek.

Indische kranten waren omstreeks 1880 nog vooral van lokale betekenis en stonden – van geringe omvang immers waren de Europese kolonies – derhalve dichtbij hun lezers. Ze bevatten daarom een schat aan informatie over het sociale en culturele leven van de toen levende Indischgasten. Dat degenen die om wat reden dan ook een prominente of op z'n minst opvallende rol vervulden in de gemeenschap daarbij extra in de schijnwerpers stonden, sprak vanzelf. Over Mina en haar leven in Indië blijkt heel wat te vinden in de Indische pers. Zo'n onderzoek vergt geduld en kost dus tijd. Maar de resultaten zijn er dan ook naar. Praamstra laat dat zien. Op basis van de nu ten langen leste aan de oppervlakte gebrachte feiten, vertelt hij ons een boeiend verhaal over een nog immer tot de verbeelding sprekende persoonlijkheid, over een vrouw bovendien die een voorbeeld is geweest voor anderen en invloed heeft uitgeoefend op de vrouwenbeweging in de kolonie.

Bij Praamstra vinden we de gegevens over Mina's Indische jaren, geplaatst in hun historische context en met gevoel voor *suspense* uit de doeken gedaan. Letten we in dit verband nog even op dat 'slotaccoord' van haar verblijf in Soerabaja: Mina woonde inderdaad samen met een (niet dertig maar twintig jaar) jongere man, maar wist dit op een vindingrijke manier geheim te houden. Omstreeks 1 oktober 1883 vertrok zij, onverwacht en samen met haar Frits, uit Soerabaja. Om zichzelf en haar minnaar te beschermen tegen het schandaal dat, waren zij gebleven, rondom hen zou zijn losgebarsten. Dat werd pas na een week of zes duidelijk: weggevaren in 'gezegende' omstandigheden, had zij 'op de zilte baren' (schreef een krant) het leven geschonken aan een meisje. Nog tijden daarna werd er in Indië aan het geval gesabbeld. Het ging aan Mina voorbij. Indië lag definitief achter haar.

Dirk A.M. Smidt (ed.), *Kamoro art; Tradition and innovation in a New Guinea culture; With an essay on Kamoro life and ritual by Jan Pouwer*. Amsterdam: KIT Publishers/Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, 2003, 157 pp. ISBN 90.6832.268.0. Price: EUR 39.50 (hardback).

JAAP TIMMER

'Papua is alive! Come and visit the Kamoro' is the slogan in the February-May 2003 newsletter of the National Museum of Ethnology (Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde) in Leiden, the Netherlands. An appealing but problematic slogan to attract visitors to a major exhibition of Kamoro (Southwest Papua/Irian Jaya) material culture. Can we really come and see the Kamoro in Leiden? The colourful cover of the brochure shows a photograph of Papuans in war-attire but it is not clear who or what they are attacking. One of the warriors directs his anger towards the camera. It is a beautiful image, though out of focus (perhaps deliberately), and its message is unclear. Are these the Kamoro that we can meet in Leiden? Does the exhibition portray the Kamoro and in particular their ways of warfare? No, on the contrary, the exhibition gives us very little insight as to what is happening in the land of the Kamoro or to what the Kamoro aspire. It appears that Papua is much less alive in Leiden than suggested.

The museum in Leiden possesses an impressive collection of over thirteen hundred Kamoro objects, comprising large spirit poles, a variety of wood-carved human figures, ancestor boards, headdresses, dance aprons, small ornaments, clubs, penis sheaths, and drums. In the exhibition, we get a chance to see impressive pieces from this collection augmented with a few objects from other Dutch museum collections, making 128 objects in total. The exhibition includes a number of recently purchased works. The grouping of objects in the exhibition, spread over two floors, three main rooms and two corridors, follows the traditional succession of Kamoro feasts with themes related to the unity of life and death and the renewal of life. Through advanced lighting in rooms devoid of daylight, every large object is individually spotlighted. Clearly, the museum has shown great creativity to make a visually attractive display, in which the Kamoro human statues come to the fore reminiscent of images of saints in a dim cathedral, illuminated by spotlight to satisfy the tourist. The Kamoro pieces, already impressive in form, motifs and their quality of the carving, begin to emanate something sacral. The museum presentation transcends the context of the carvings in Kamoro daily life.

Almost half of the Kamoro objects in Leiden were collected during the first military exploration of Netherlands New Guinea under the command of

Captain Antony J. Gooszen, between 1907 and 1915. This was not the period of 'first contact' for the Kamoro since they were trading with Moluccans for centuries and were first visited by the Dutch during the Cartensz expedition in 1612 (and again in 1636 by another Dutch expedition led by Gerrit Pool). The next period of extensive contact between the Kamoro and Westerners resulted from the Triton Expedition, which spent eleven days in a Kamoro settlement in 1828. During this expedition, Salomon Müller acquired some of the earliest Kamoro objects in the Leiden collection. The responses of the Kamoro to foreigners went through a number of phases. Initially there was a perceived need for self-protection against these possibly evil and unclean strangers. Interest in particular foreigners grew during the twentieth century as Roman Catholic missionaries and the Dutch government established posts along the Mimika River, bringing messages of salvation and the promise of improved welfare. This coincided with a growing local hunger for commodities as the Kamoro attempted to use objects to track down the sources of spiritual power they believed the whites possessed. In the course of the twentieth century, however, the promised affluence did not materialize and it became apparent to most Kamoro that they were in an underprivileged part of the world. Moreover, due to migration of Indonesians from elsewhere to the Kamoro region, the Kamoro community, now numbering around 18,000, are a minority in their own land. What has become of their material culture?

The colourful catalogue under review here engages with this question. A lavishly illustrated book, it is an invaluable source of information on the Kamoro and their objects. Thoroughly documented as a catalogue, it also contains six intriguing essays. The texts of the essays are printed in the same small columns as the descriptions of the objects in the subsequent catalogue section. Amid these columns, numerous floating notes printed in small fonts and often excessively small plates dazzle the reader. Opposite these pages are blown-up plates of photographs that are often out of focus. The Franciscan Photo Documentation Bureau at Utrecht and the Sacred Heart missionaries in Tilburg made the most impressive older photographs available, while most of the recent ones were taken by Kal Muller. In recent years Muller has been involved with a range of public relations work for the Freeport mine, one of the world's largest gold and copper mines. Freeport began operations in Papua in the 1960s. Generating immense revenues for Western shareholders, the Indonesian government and the Indonesian military, the mining operations have radically altered the landscape and lives of the highland Amungme and also those of the Kamoro, their coastal neighbours.

During the zenith of Dutch governance in the late 1940s and the 1950s, it was already apparent to Indonesia and the outside world, in particular the United States, that Papua was abundantly rich in natural resources. During the period of United Nations-led transfer from colonial government to inte-

gration in Indonesia in the mid-1960s, American investors began the explorations which subsequently led to exploitation of gold and copper in the mountains of the Amungme. In a relatively short period, a massive mining project developed without any serious dialogue with, or significant involvement of, local communities. During the past few decades, the mythical mountains of the Amungme have become open pits. Human rights violations have been a natural concomitant. After an initial period of subtle intimidation, growing violent and non-violent resistance against the mine became controlled and instigated by the Indonesian military in often very sinister ways and with the tacit support of PT Freeport Indonesia and McMoRan Copper & Gold Inc., its mother company in New Orleans. In addition, the project affected parts of the natural environment through pollution far beyond the mining sites. As a result, many Kamoro rivers are empty of fish, drinking water is polluted, and forests full of important products are dead.

The anthropological and historical essays, among which are some gems, do not deal with these issues, probably because most of the authors were sponsored by Freeport in getting access to Papua and most likely wish to maintain this good relationship in order to return for further research and collecting in the future. Their accounts comprise: a history of the Kamoro collection in Leiden by the curator for Oceania, Dirk Smidt; a brief argument about the continuity and efficacy of principal Kamoro values by anthropologist Todd Harple and local ethnographer and civil servant Methodius Mamapuku; an impressive and elaborate rationalization of mythological and ritual themes and carving motifs, situating the objects in the context of a succession of feasts and rituals, by the anthropologist Jan Pouwer; a musing on social and cultural changes in the 1950s by the then administrative officer Hein van der Schoot; an explanation of the origin of woodcarving motifs that relate to both traditional and Catholic themes by the art historian Karen Jacobs; and a description, also by Jacobs, of the recent annual Kamoro Art Festivals organized and financed by Freeport.

Together, these articles offer a brief but detailed introduction to conceptual traditional Kamoro spiritual worldviews and ritual practices, in particular as imagined and articulated by academic outsiders. Jan Pouwer's essay is the most remarkable as it reflects the anthropologist's own insights in Kamoro culture, based on three years of fieldwork in the 1950s, combined with materials collected by the late Fathers Zegwaard m.s.c. and Coenen o.f.m. Pouwer's essay is a gem that meticulously presents mythological and ritual structures based on deep insights and careful analysis. The other essays, which at times aspire to relate to current issues, do not in fact give a very clear sense of what the Kamoro (women and men, young and old) actually think or to what they aspire today. The only essay to provide a glimpse of what is currently going on in the community is Jacobs' treatment of the

role of the recently collected objects in the lives of the Kamoro. This piece includes an eyewitness account of the 2002 Kamoro Arts Festival, describing the atmosphere during the event with specific emphasis on the auction of selected pieces and its social, economic and artistic effects for the woodcarvers. Jacobs' conclusion is that over the last few years the Kamoro have come to participate in the festivals with increasing enthusiasm, and increasingly begin to see them as opportunities to confirm and express their identity *vis-à-vis* local, regional and international outsiders. In what ways these identities relate to transgressions of their human dignity, to the ongoing conflicts with Freeport, to related acts of terror by the Indonesian military, and to the destruction of Kamoro subsistence resources is left out of the discussion. Dirk Smidt, who collected pieces for the museum during the festivals in 2000 and 2002, also seems to have overlooked the widespread resistance to Freeport and the Indonesian government among the Kamoro and their neighbours. I was also surprised that the book itself, with the exception of the collaboration between Mamapuku and Harple, includes no Kamoro voices.

In the museum exhibition, likewise, one does hardly get a sense of the difficult interactions between Papuans and the Indonesian state that have created much discontent. Here one can learn about critique of the mine only in one corner of a room where a computer terminal provides access to a number of internet sites that are listed by the exhibition organisers. The exhibition is introduced by a short film in which there are powerful references to the mine and to the immigration of other Indonesians into Kamoro country. But even here – despite the fact that film is an excellent medium for giving voice to an out-of-the-way people's concerns – we hear no Kamoro voices. Only in a video presentation in another room we can see some Kamoro at work – making a canoe and carving a drum and a spirit pole.

In the meantime, *reformasi* has stagnated in Papua, which has seen a virtual return to Jakarta-bred New Order politics. The dialogue that started in 1999 between President Habibie and one hundred representatives from all the districts of Papua, and then the promising, but ultimately very confused meetings of Papuans with Abdurrachman Wahid, suggested that Jakarta was developing an appreciation of Papuan discontent. But since the fall of President Wahid, old New Order ideologies and presumptions appear to be taking hold again among those who feel capable of developing strategies to deal with Papuans. The current Megawati government is trying to put a lid on sectarian, racial, communal, and separatist tensions through a combination of military force and inducements to regional élites. Positive developments that are supported by a growing number of critical politicians and academics have largely failed to influence the mainstream thinking of the generals and of many other local and Jakarta élites whose thinking is blinkered by vested economic and political interests.

But there are also positive developments. The Kamoro, like other groups in Papua, are becoming increasingly engaged with a wider world. They have begun to organize their own communities in new ways that are more appropriate to current needs and concerns. Civil society organizations like church groups, development-oriented NGOs and legal aid institutes now speak out more critically and are able to put increasing pressure for change on the government and the companies involved in resource exploitation. Themes such as human rights violations among Papuans, domestic violence, gender differences, racism and discrimination are discussed more often and in more critical ways than in the past. More Kamoro and Amungme now study at universities, vocational schools and theological colleges, and some of them occupy high positions in business corporations, in schools and universities, and in the government. It is a shame that the museum in Leiden has missed an opportunity to involve the Dutch in these more pressing aspects of Kamoro life.

Amy L. Freedman, *Political participation and ethnic minorities: Chinese overseas in Malaysia, Indonesia and the United States*. London: Routledge, 2000, xvi + 231 pp. ISBN 0.415.92446.4. Price: GBP 12.99 (paperback); ISBN 0.415.92445.6. Price: GBP 45 (hardback).

SIKKO VISSCHER

Comparison is a noble cause, especially in research analyses concerning ethnic minorities, in which the danger of cultural essentialization is ever-present. From this point of view Amy Freedman needs to be commended for the effort she has made in looking at political participation by ethnic minorities in disparate settings. It is, however, a pity that her unit of comparison, as well as the contextual dynamics in which it is studied, does not allow a real and useful comparison.

Freedman wants to look cross-nationally at how and why ethnic Chinese communities have accessed the political arena of their countries of residence. For this purpose she has selected four case studies: Malaysia, Indonesia, Monterey Park (California), and New York. The observation that for ethnic Chinese communities outside of China, levels of political participation are not correlated with socioeconomic variables such as income or education, serves as a point of departure. With this stance, and the manner in which she operationalizes this in her research questions, she belies a bias toward a Western-style, liberal democratic political model as a yardstick to measure other polities. She presupposes, for instance, that in a country with elec-

tions the most fruitful avenue via which to influence the political process is through participation in elections as voters and candidates.

This is definitely not true in the case of Indonesia, and only partially so in the case of Malaysia. The comparison is therefore hampered by the fact that the central question is formulated in a negative rather than a positive manner. The question is not: why did the ethnic Chinese seek political participation in the disparate ways they did, but rather: why did they not participate in the manner typical of most liberal democracies? To her credit, Freedman does introduce historical arguments and context which help to indicate why the politics chosen have developed in the way they have. However, because she has chosen a limited ideal type as a basis of comparison, this potentially useful information almost inevitably leads to classification of the case as an 'exception' rather than a 'relevant pattern'.

In the conclusion, Freedman makes a very important observation that relates to this last point. She writes that the political participation of ethnic Chinese is greatly influenced by factors external to their community: that is, the larger political community and the usefulness of the ethnic Chinese electorate to candidates or parties dictates whether the ethnic Chinese can have political influence. Because political participation is closely related to the expectation of influence, this has a great bearing on the political behavior of ethnic Chinese in all three countries. It also serves to undermine faulty, circular culturalist assumptions that Chinese will not be politically active by virtue of the fact that they are Chinese.

Here the value of comparison comes out, but it is a pity that the author presents this insight as a conclusion rather than as an alternative to her original point of departure. If the book had been focused on political effectiveness rather than on political participation, a more fruitful analysis could have been set up in which the case studies could have been compared on the basis of a set of positive questions. In addition, the mutual dynamics operating between the ethnic Chinese community and its politics on the one side, and the larger political arena on the other, could then have been explored in such a way as to throw more light on the specificities of each case, and at the same time to make a more effective and useful comparison possible.

Mary Somers Heidhues, *Golddiggers, farmers, and traders in the 'Chinese Districts' of West Kalimantan, Indonesia*. Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 2003, 309 pp. ISBN 0.87727.733.8. Price: USD 18 (paperback).

REED L. WADLEY

This clearly written and wide-ranging book covers the history of the Chinese settlements in West Kalimantan from their establishment in the mid-eighteenth century as gold-mining enterprises to the continuing challenges they have faced in the late twentieth century. It provides a more comprehensive perspective on the West Bornean Chinese than do more specifically focused works such as Yuan Bingling's *Chinese Democracies; A study of the kongsis of West Borneo (1776-1884)*. (Leiden: CNWS, 2000). Among other things, Heidhues examines the relations among the various Chinese communities themselves and between indigenous Malay states and Dayak communities. She offers detailed accounts of the violent confrontations between Chinese gold-mining *kongsi* (cooperative enterprises) and the Dutch as both expanded their influence in the early nineteenth century. She notes that for the Dutch, 'the Malay principalities could be tolerated, more because of their weakness than their virtues; Chinese organizations, whatever their virtues, were intolerable because of their strength' (p. 61).

Throughout the book, the author gives attention to demographic and economic trends which formed the backdrop to the social and political conditions she describes. She also documents the decline of the *kongsi*, the depopulation and impoverishment of the Chinese districts as gold sources dwindled in the late nineteenth century, and the transformation of the Chinese into a largely urban and peri-urban population in the early twentieth century (with some dispersal into the interior for trading). The three last chapters cover a time period that has received very little attention from outside scholars, that from the 1940s to the present. Heidhues details the conditions faced by Chinese communities immediately before, during and after the Japanese occupation, as well as the troubles which Indonesian independence brought for them as their legal status as foreigners and their alleged support for Communism led to anti-Chinese pogroms in the 1960s and 70s.

The history that Heidhues provides is fairly straightforward. It lacks the revisionist passion that drives John Walker's perceptive analysis of James Brooke's kingdom in Sarawak (*Power and prowess; The origins of Brooke kingship in Sarawak*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002). Nor does it provide deep exploration between the 'cracks in the parchment curtain', to borrow William Henry Scott's felicitous phrase (*Cracks in the parchment curtain*, Quezon City: New Day, 1982), to elucidate how Chinese cultural models might have structured people's actions – although Heidhues does give some attention to the ritual importance of *kongsi* halls (pp. 106-7) and to supernatural aid in war (p. 122). In addition the author ties the history of West Kalimantan's ethnic Chinese population only rather weakly to that of the rest of the province, whereas such links could usefully have been examined more deeply in such contexts as the rebellions which took place in Sintang and Upper Kapuas during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

And the important cross-border connections between Sarawak and West Kalimantan Chinese are not given the attention they probably deserve either, particularly in the twentieth century. These minor points notwithstanding, this is an important contribution to Southeast Asian history, and I for one will be making use of it in my own work.

Leonard Blussé and Ilonka Ooms (eds), *Kennis en Compagnie; De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie en de moderne wetenschap*. Amsterdam: Balans, 2002, 191 pp. ISBN 90.5018.574.6. Price: EUR 22.50 (paperback).

Femme S. Gaastra, *De geschiedenis van de VOC*. Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2002, 192 pp. ISBN 90.5730.184.9. Price: EUR 24.95 (hardback).

Jan Parmentier, Karel Davids and John Everaert (eds), *Peper, Plancius en porselein; De reis van het schip Swarte Leeuw naar Atjeh en Bantam, 1601-1603*. Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2003, 237 pp. [Werken van de Linschoten-Vereeniging 101.] ISBN 90.5730.210.1. Price: EUR 24.95 (hardback).

EDWIN WIERINGA

In the framework of the commemoration of the four hundredth anniversary of the Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC, United East India Company), a Studium Generale series of lectures by prominent Dutch scholars was organized at the University of Leiden on the heritage of the VOC in various branches of knowledge. Leonard Blussé and Ilonka Ooms have edited twelve papers written for that occasion in a book entitled 'Knowledge and Company'. The subjects, mostly focusing on insular Southeast Asia, range from astronomy, architecture, economics, law and administration, Christianity, linguistics (Malay), scurvy, the taxonomy of plants and Rumphius's 'Ambonese Curiosity Cabinet' to Japanese prints and travelogues. The book is enlivened by many illustrations (black and white, colour). First presented as talks for a relatively broad public, that is to say, a highly educated, but nonetheless non-specialist audience, a happy outcome of the format adopted here is that the authors have presented their articles in an accessible form of limited length. Fortunately the rather artificially informal 'jocular' tone of a scholar talking down to the uninitiated, which is often to be observed in writings aimed at popularizing academic topics,

is only encountered here in the first essay (dealing with astronomy) and, to a lesser extent, in the final article on travelogues. The theme 'Heritage of the VOC' of the lecture series has apparently led some writers to dwell rather extensively on post-VOC developments. In fact, the piece on travel stories is a general discussion of this genre, in which narratives by VOC employees are very much a sideshow. Furthermore, the contribution on legal and administrative issues in Indonesia barely mentions the VOC, but pays relatively much attention to developments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and especially to the contemporary situation during the so-called *Reformasi* era since 1998.

The commemoration year 2002 also saw the publication of Femme Gaastra's so-called 'jubilee edition' of his history of the VOC, which is, in fact, a reissue of the 1991 revised version of his book that originally appeared in 1982. For this occasion Gaastra did not alter the text of the 1991 edition, but in the valuable bibliographical essay at the end (pp. 179-88) he has updated the references, drawing attention to new insights and recent historiographical developments in the last decade. This clear, concise and accurate overview had already taken its place as the most authoritative book on the subject, but the attraction of this special jubilee edition is greatly augmented by the lavish display of illustrations, many of them showing things in all their colours.

Peper, Plancius en Porselein ('Pepper, Plancius and Porcelain') is Volume 101 in the series of the Linschoten-Vereeniging publications. Founded in 1908, this learned society fosters the critical edition of travelogues by Dutch sailors and members of expeditions from the sixteenth century onwards. This book contains the text of the log of the *Swarte Leeuw* over the years 1601-1603, written by Reyer Cornelisz, the ship's helmsman. Long believed to be lost, the manuscript was found a few years ago by the editors in the Library of the University of Gent (Hs. 2754). This high-quality edition, befitting the general standard of the series, is preceded by an informative introduction (pp. 11-91), presenting the necessary background to the actual narrative (pp. 93-193), whereas additional data from other contemporaneous travelogues are given in the supplements (pp. 195-219). As the editors point out, Cornelisz's ambitions went well beyond drafting a mere daily account of a voyage to and from the archipelago. This man was an experienced navigator who was making his second trip to the East Indies. Conversant with the newest scientific methods of his day for calculating latitude and the longitude at sea, he intended to compile a mariner's manual of routes to Southeast Asia. A gifted cartographer, he also drew up eight coastal profiles and four maritime charts. His map of Mauritius is the most complete Dutch map of the island of that period. These illustrations are all reproduced in this edition. Upon his return home, however, publishers were not interested in printing Cornelisz's manuscript. According to the editors, although at that time readers in the

Dutch Republic craved for sensationalist stories about long and arduous voyages to exotic places, Cornelisz's rather technical and matter-of-fact account apparently lacked the desired exciting adventure stories.